

Victor Suvorov M-Day

Series: *Icebreaker* - 2



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Annotation

Viktor Suvorov is the pseudonym of professional intelligence agent V.B. Rezun, who fled to Great Britain in 1978. He was sentenced to death in absentia in the USSR. In the books "Icebreaker" and "M-Day" the author offers his version of the beginning of World War II.

Victor Suvorov M-Day When did World War II start?

Mobilization is war.
Marshal of the Soviet Union **B.M.Shaposhnikov**

DEDICATION

BOGDAN VASILYEVICH REZUN, trainee cadet of the antitank battery of the 637th rifle regiment of the 140th rifle division of the 36th rifle corps of the 5th Army of the Southwest the front.

TO MY READER

After the release of "Icebreaker" in Germany, I received three cubic meters of mail from former German soldiers and officers: letters, books, diaries, front documents, photographs. After the release of "Icebreaker" in Russia, I received more. On the agenda is the Leninist question: what to do? Should we write answers? Will life be enough? Do I have the right not to write answers?

There's no duty of courtesy. Each letter is interesting in its own way. But all together, it's a treasure. It's a layer of history that no one has studied. It's thousands of testimonies, and each one refutes the official version of the war.

Perhaps some academic institution has a larger collection of manuscript evidence, but I believe my collection is more interesting.

The front-line soldiers, having lived long, difficult lives, suddenly began to write to me at the end of their years, opening their souls, telling me things they had never told anyone.

Most of the letters are not from front-line soldiers, but from their descendants - children and grandchildren. And all of them are secret: "My father used to tell me about it in his circle.

What shocked me was that ALL the testimonies of both the living participants of the war and those of their relatives do not match the picture of the beginning of the war, which the official historical science has been painting for half a century. Maybe the front-line soldiers and their descendants distort the truth?

You'd think that if the mail was a hundred pounds. Such a trifle could be dismissed. But there's LOTS of mail. Can you imagine what the word MULTIPLE means?

All about the same thing. They couldn't all have colluded. The authors of thousands of letters from Russia could not have colluded with the authors of thousands of letters from Germany, Poland, Canada, Australia....

Example. We knew from the official version of the war that war broke out and the artist Irakli Toidze, in an outburst of noble indignation, depicted the Motherland calling to battle. The poster appeared in the very first days of the war, soon became world famous and became a graphic symbol of the war, which the Communists called "the Great Patriotic War".

And they write to me that the poster appeared on the streets of Soviet cities not in the very first days of the war, but in the very first.

In the streets of Yaroslavl - by the evening of June 22. In Saratov - "in the afternoon". On June 22 in Kuibyshev this poster was pasted on the walls of the carriages of military echelons, with which the railway station was packed. In Novosibirsk and Khabarovsk the poster appeared no later than June 23. Airplanes then flew with many intermediate landings, and did not reach Khabarovsk in a day. But if we assume that the plane was loaded with posters on June 22, and it reached Khabarovsk overnight, then the question arises: when were these posters printed? June 22? Let's say. When did Irakli Toidze create his masterpiece? No matter how you look at it: before June 22. So he did not create it in a fit of noble rage, but before this rage could boil up in him. How did he know about the German attack, if Stalin himself did not expect an attack? A mystery of history....

Here's a clue. Letter from Argentina. Author Kadygrove Nikolai Ivanovich. Before the war, he was a senior lieutenant at a recruiting station in Minsk. Each recruiting station kept a certain-

A large number of secret mobilization documents in sealed bags marked:

"To be opened on M-Day." At the end of 1940, more and more such documents began to arrive. And in December, three huge packages arrived, each with five sealing seals. The same order: "Open them on M-Day. The packages are secret, and they are supposed to be kept in a safe. But the trouble is, they don't fit. I had to order a steel box and use it instead of a safe.

Six months have passed, June 22 - war. What to do with the documents? Molotov said on the radio that the war had begun, but there was no signal to open the packages. If you open them yourself, they'll shoot you. The officers are sitting, waiting. There's no signal. The signal never came. But in the evening, an order came over the phone: packages with such and such numbers were to be destroyed without opening them, packages with such and such numbers were to be opened.

Many things were destroyed at once, including two of the three huge packages. How could they be destroyed if each contained 500 sheets of heavy paper? We burned them in a metal barrel and insured ourselves with an act: we, the undersigned, burned the packages and had to stir the burning sheets with a poker, but nobody looked into the fire... And we signed it. And then there will be a doubt: whether they were not curious about the content, burning. That's why the act: they weren't curious.

And one of the three huge packages was ordered to be unclassified, the package was to be opened, and the contents were to be used for their intended purpose. They opened it. Inside was a pack of posters: "Motherland is calling!". The posters were pasted up on the night of June 23. But they arrived in December 1940. The picture emerges: the posters were prepared in advance, printed in sufficient quantities for the whole country and sent in secret packages to the relevant institutions. Something was going on. But on June 22, Hitler struck a preemptive strike, and in an instant many of those posters, to put it mildly, became irrelevant.

The Soviet Union had to fight a defensive war on its own territory, while the tanned posters in the other two packages called for a completely different war. The content of the prepared propaganda did not correspond to the spirit of a defensive war. So the order was to destroy them without opening them. Maybe they were great masterpieces, maybe they would have become world-famous. But the artists who created them were unlucky.

And Irakli Toidze was lucky - his poster (maybe contrary to the author's intention) turned out to be universal: "Motherland Calls". But he did not write where it was calling to. That is why his poster was also suitable for a defensive war. That is why Toidze's poster was ordered to be distributed throughout the country.

This was the case with all the symbols of the "Great Patriotic War" - they were prepared in advance.
Song

"Holy War" was written BEFORE the German invasion. The monumental symbol of the "Great Patriotic War" is a "warrior-liberator" with a child in his arms. This image appeared in the newspaper "Pravda" in September 1939 on the third day after the Soviet "liberation march" into Poland began. If Hitler had not attacked, we would still have been "liberators". Monumental, graphic and musical symbols of the "liberation" war had already been created, some of them, like Toidze's posters, had already been mass-produced....

It will be objected: can we believe an officer who was taken prisoner and after the war for some reason ended up not in the homeland of the world proletariat, but in Argentina?

Well, let's not believe it. But those who returned to the home of the world proletariat after the war tell equally amazing stories.

After the release of The Icebreaker, Kremlin historians in numerous articles tried to deny Stalin's preparations for the "liberation" of Europe.

It came to curiosities. One literary scholar discovered that the words of the song "Holy War" were written during the First World War. Lebedev-Kumach simply stole someone else's words and passed them off as his own. My critics seized on this publication and repeated in print many times-, the words were written a quarter of a century before the German attack! That's right. But do I argue with that? Does it matter?

Stalin in FEBRUARY 1941 needed a song about the great war against Germany. And Stalin ordered such a song - that's the main thing. And how the performers managed to fulfill Stalin's order: they translated it from Japanese or Mongolian, stole it or composed it themselves - this is a question that has nothing to do with my book. The answer to it does not change anything, does not prove anything, does not refute anything. And it's not about Lebedev-Kumach. A song is a piece of music. That's why Stalin in February set the task not to Lebedev-Kumach, but to the composer

Alexander Vasilyevich Alexandrov.

In the letters I received, several testimonies that not only Alexandrov wrote a song about the war. And not only composers and poets were preparing for the "liberation" war, but also doctors, teachers, singers, dancers, acrobats, and magicians. Amazingly, the official press talks about the same thing.

Here is the testimony of Konstantin Simonov in the newspaper "Red Star" on November 7, 1992. Simonov is a favorite of Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev; he is a hero, holder of seven orders, winner of four Stalin prizes; in Stalin's time he was a candidate member of the Central Committee. He testifies that in the summer of 1940 they gathered civilian writers and began to prepare for war. Konstantin Simonov himself was in the platoon of poets of the company of writers A year were prepared, and on June 15, 1941 were awarded military ranks. Simonov - intendant of the 2nd rank, which corresponded to lieutenant colonel.

The crowd in the street in those days could not understand the meaning of the June 13th TAS message, while Soviet writers and poets were already trying on officer's uniforms and putting on boots.

Simonov continues: "On June 22, the war began, and all of us had already been pre-written, from central newspapers to divisional newspapers..." Each of Stalin's 303 divisions had its own divisional newspaper. If one writer was sent to the editorial office of each divisional newspaper, how many of them were prepared? Poet-writers were required for corps newspapers, and for army, navy, district, and frontline newspapers.

At the GRU Academy I was taught to pay attention to small details, the smallest ones. Only from them can you get an idea of what's going on. I'm following my teachers. I pay attention to details.

And the details are blatant: the ranks of military Stalin did not throw. Military pilots in those days served in the rank of sergeant, link commanders and even deputy commanders of squadrons - sergeants. Officer ranks began with the position of squadron commander. And here - a civilian man Konstantin Simonov, a writer, did not serve in the army, 25 years old, a year of training and - the primary rank, equal to lieutenant colonel.

This is serious. And he was not alone. Regimental Commissar Mikhail Sholokhov, Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Tvardovsky, Battalion Commissar Alexei Surkov, Brigade Commissar Alexander Fadeev, 3rd rank Intendant Leonid Pervomaysky, Brigade Commissar (the rank corresponded to that of a general) Vsevolod Vishnevsky and the entire Union of Writers were there, almost in full. The only exception was for those unable to bear arms.

Imagine yourself a Soviet intelligence analyst. You have a very empty message on your desk: Hitler in 1940 gathered all German writers and poets, chased them around firing ranges for a year, and now they have been promoted to the rank of general and are being prepared to be sent to the Soviet border. The dispatch is secret, with elements of masquerade: some of them are posing as intendant, specialists in supplying boots and overcoats.

How would you, a Soviet intelligence analyst, react to such a report? What would you report to your superiors? But nothing like this was happening in Germany, it was happening in the Soviet Union. And if such information reached German intelligence, how was it supposed to react to it? What should it report to its commanders? On the one hand the soothing reports of TASS, on the other....

After Hitler's preemptive strike, the masquerade was no longer necessary, and all the writers' Intendant ranks were changed to standard army ranks. But there was a reason for this masquerade before the war.

Another point - if Hitler had not attacked, what did Stalin intend to do with his writers and poets: would he let them show off in officer's uniforms for a year or two, and then take away their officer's ranks and return them to Moscow, or what?

In the summer of 1939, the same Konstantin Simonov was a war correspondent in Zhukov's army group on Khalkhin-Gol. At that time, he was doing quite well without military training and without an officer's rank. But in the summer of 1940, someone needed to start mass preparation for the war of journalists, writers, poets. In the summer of 1940, Hitler didn't have a Barbarossa plan yet. But Comrade Stalin already had some plans.

Our writers and poets were a little late: they had completed their military training, received their ranks, were distributed to fronts, armies, corps, divisions, and packed their suitcases.

and were about to leave for their front offices... and then Hitler attacked.

At the moment of the last preparations Hitler found not only Konstantin Simonov and his brothers-in-arms, but also the entire Red Army: loading, en route, unloading. Stalin had everything thought out and prepared for the invasion. Everything, down to the victory posters and front editorials, ready to sing the great feat of the Soviet people on the fields of victorious battles. If we do not believe the former officer from Argentina, let us believe "Red Star" and the Hero Laureate Cavalier-Intendant.

The letters I have received from my readers are a dumb heritage, they are our memory, our history, our past, our future. Without knowing the past, we will not be able to get rid of it in the future. That's why I promise: one day I will publish my letters about the war. I don't know how many volumes, but I know that this is the most interesting thing that has ever been written about the war.

To all those to whom I have not yet responded personally, please forgive me. Please take into account the situation in which I found myself. To everyone who has written to me, I am grateful. There have been some scathing letters. I am most grateful to their authors. It suddenly occurred to me to become the foremost critic of my books. Each of us makes mistakes, each of us is a sinner. With your help I want to correct mistakes, with your help I want to polish my books so that their meaning would be clear to everyone:

I am ready to listen to any criticism in letters and in the press. Over the past year I have collected more than three hundred reviews of *The Icebreaker*. Sometimes they are entire pages of scathing criticism. Sometimes I wanted to snap back, but the GRU taught me to be humble: respect your opponent, try to understand his arguments, try to benefit even from the anger of your enemies. I do.

I am grateful to all those who wrote scathing and laudatory reviews. I promise that someday I will publish a whole book with responses to the criticism and will try to answer all the questions posed. We are all doing the same thing. We are all trying to understand our past, albeit from different perspectives.

Viktor SUVOROV. September 13, 1993, Oxford.

Chapter 1 WITH SCREEP

There has never been a war in history whose causes and objectives have not been presented by the instigators and their learned lackeys in a perverted, falsified form.
Soviet Military Encyclopedia. Vol.6, p.554.

The Russian soldier wore leather boots. But the Communists introduced an ersatz substitute. And the Soviet soldier began to walk not in leather boots, but in kirzov boots. Of course, in the capital's garri-zones "court" regiments and divisions wore leather boots. Let foreigners think that a Soviet soldier lives well. And the Soviet occupation troops in the socialist countries - Germany, Poland, Hungary - wore leather boots - let everyone believe that the Soviet Union was a superpower. But the superpower could not provide all its soldiers with leather boots, so the Soviet soldier walked around the Union in kirzov boots. And uncomfortable. Literally and figuratively. Especially uncomfortable when you have to perform an honorable international task.

In the summer of 1968, I, a young officer, was brought by military fate to the Carpathians on the border with the brotherly socialist Czechoslovakia. The counter-revolution was strangling the country, and our good Soviet Army had to intervene and help the brotherly people, but... It was not comfortable in kirzas. It is just not good for a warrior-liberator to trample Europe with an inferior boot. It's not convenient. It's clear, we officers have the right boots, with squeak and shine. But our soldiers have unseemly shoes.

We are weary of waiting. A week in the woods, another week in the woods. A month we wait, another month we wait. And it's getting close to August. We're bored with the woods. Either our leaders would make one decision or another: either they would return our divisions to camps and military camps, or they would give an order to render international aid to the brotherly people... But there is no decision, and that's why we are waiting. All day long we study till the twelfth sweat, and in the evening we have dinner around the fire and guess: shall we go to Czechoslovakia or not... And again we study in the morning, or even in the evening... And again we guess.

And then, in the evening, huge Ural-375 trucks appeared in the clearing along which our battalion was standing. Each of them was carrying many tons of good leather boots: take them away! And those boots were dumped right on the clearing, just like dump trucks throwing rock into boiling water, blocking the Yenisei. A lot of boots. No count. There is, of course, a count, but without much precision: take them away, there's enough for everyone. Yeoman, how many men do you have? One hundred and twenty-nine? Here are one hundred and twenty-nine pairs! Sizes? You'll figure it out. You'll swap with your neighbors. How many do you have? Two hundred and fifty-seven? Here's a lot for you!

And all along the sagebrush all at once, thousands of pairs fall to the ground. Tens of thousands of pairs. Hundreds of thousands. Shoe them all in one night! Throw off the bad kirzovye ones and put on the good leather ones! We're not alone in our forest. There's a battalion to the right and a battalion to the left. Ahead of us - some artillerymen, further in the fir-trees - another battalion, and another one, and so on ad infinitum. And all the neighboring and distant forests are full of troops. And we are not battalions, not regiments and not divisions, we are whole armies: the 8th Guards Tank Army is changing its shoes, and the 13th Army, and some other army behind us. All at once they brought a lot of boots. With a reserve. Too many. And already our soldiers are squeaking with new boots on all the clearings, on all the glades. It's nice to see: yalov leather. Top class. A sight to behold. From the state reserves.

The forests of our borderlands all at once overflowed with the squeak of leather boots, like the trills of spring birds. And this squeak led to thoughts and conclusions.

Our battalion commander gathered the officers. He was a big-ass commander. Lieutenant Colonel Protasov. He didn't like unnecessary words: "Comrade officers," he said, "we should drink and eat. Who knows what awaits us around the corner?"

We got into an armored personnel carrier and went to a nearby village. There were artillery officers already drinking in the pub, as well as engineers and political officers. It's too crowded.

It is clear to everyone that our beloved Motherland does not spoil her sons for nothing. And if that's the case, we must drink. Maybe it's the last time we drink. Maybe we will have to fight for the freedom of the brotherly people of Czechoslovakia and lay down our heads in the bloody struggle against the capitalists. Then we raised our flasks for Czechoslovakia, for its freedom-loving people, who crave our help and which we will give them. Unselfishly. We are kind. We help everyone. When asked. When they don't ask, we help them too. In short, we sit and drink. There is no order yet, but it is already clear to everyone: to us, the officers, to our soldiers, to the barmaid who gives us a refill, and to the old man who is sitting in the corner with a beer mug. The old man would like to join our company and say a learned word, but we are not supposed to communicate with the civilian population in such a situation, so as not to reveal military secrets. The intentions of our command.

The old man was sitting in the corner, all twisted up: he wanted to talk to us so badly... It didn't work out for him. And when we were leaving, he spoke to himself, as if by the way, as if to himself, but so that everyone could hear:

— Just like in forty-one.....

We didn't expect such a thing and couldn't understand it. And it was said with a challenge, so that we had to answer.

— What are you talking about, old man?

— About the squeaking. In June of the forty-first the Red Army in these places squeaked with new leather boots just like that. That's when I lost my peace.

After the "liberation campaign" in Czechoslovakia, I had to serve in the same places, in the Carpathians. And I had to traverse, trample, and traverse both the Carpathian and Transcarpathian regions. And whenever I had a chance, I would go to old people, to old residents, to living witnesses: how was it? And it was confirmed by many testimonies: in 1941, before the German attack, the Red Army in the frontier regions was re-shod in leather boots. And not only in Ukraine, but also in Moldavia, but also in Belarus, but also in Lithuania, but also in Karelia. In addition, in 1941, leather boots were brought to the border regions for millions of soldiers who were planned to be transferred from the interior of the country at the last moment.

Under the cover of the TASS Report of June 13, 1941, millions of soldiers from the interior moved toward the borders, and leather boots for them were already being unloaded - at railroad stations near the borders.

At Zhmerinka station, for example, in early June 1941, leather boots were unloaded from railroad cars and stacked near the railroad in the open air. "How big is the pile? -

asked. - And all the way to the sky," replied the old peasant woman. "Like the pyramid of Cheops," replied the schoolteacher. In Slavuta the pile of boots did not look like the pyramid of Cheops, it was just as big as half of the pyramid of Cheops. In Zaleshiki in May of '41, almost the entire able-bodied population was unloaded to unload leather boots - in order to train them to free communist labor. Mountains of boots are remembered in Kovel, Baranovichi, Grodno....

I started the conversation from afar: what did they unload at the stations before the war? "Tanks," they said, "guns, unloaded soldiers, green crates and... boots. I can't say that the boots were very much emphasized: if a person has lived near the station all his life, I can see anything on the tracks, on the platforms, on the unloading platforms. I can't remember everything. But still there was something special, mystical in the very fact of unloading boots that made people pay attention and remember it for the rest of their lives.

People remembered those boots mainly for three reasons. First, there were a lot of boots. An unusually large number. Secondly, they were laid directly on the ground. Sometimes with a tarp, sometimes without a tarp. That was unusual. Thirdly, the Germans got all this stuff. And this is the moment that is memorable.

None of the locals knew or could know why so many boots were brought to the border in 1941. And I did not understand the purpose for which, in 1941, Soviet soldiers at the border were given good leather boots instead of bad kirzov boots. Everything is clear about 1968: we went to liberate brotherly Czechoslovakia. But in 1941, what did our fathers intend to do?

By the way, my father went through the war from the very first day to the very last day, and then went from the first day to the last day of a short, furious war against the Japanese army in China. I asked him how he entered the war, where, when, in what division, what corps? In what kind of boots? He told me. I checked his story later through the archives.

After his service in the Carpathians, he studied at the military academy and had the opportunity (and the desire) to search the archives. Materials on boot production, on deliveries to the Red Army, on the location of stocks of boots and other equipment were secret in those days. I had access to secret materials, but in a million papers I could not find the right one. I had to gather information bit by bit. I collected and never ceased to be surprised: the war was over long ago, almost 30 years had passed since the end of the war, but the information about storage, transportation, losses of soldiers' boots in the pre-war years was secret, and remains secret. Why?

In England they say, "Curiosity kills the cat." I didn't know that wisdom at the time. If I had, I would not have quit my job: curiosity may ruin a cat, but I am not a cat. Many years later I realized that curiosity ruins not only the cat....

It turned out that not only millions of pairs of leather boots, but also millions of sets of uniforms, tens of thousands of tons of spare parts for tanks, hundreds of thousands of tons of liquid fuel for planes, tanks and cars, millions of boxes of shells and ammunition had been transported to the border by order of the Soviet government. All this was abandoned at the borders when the Germans struck.

And again the question is: what was the purpose of dragging all this stuff to the borders, because before 1939 all these stocks were stored far away from the borders. So let them stay there. When war breaks out, our army will be on the defensive, and we will bring from a safe distance as many supplies as we need, without accumulating unnecessary surpluses in dangerous areas.

Had a lot of questions, no answers. I kept searching. The results of the search were summarized in the book "Icebreaker". "M-Day" is the second book. For those who have read "The Icebreaker", "M-Day" is a follow-up. But you can read "M-Day" as a separate book.

In Icebreaker, I deliberately made little use of archival materials. I could be reproached: you quote this and that, but how can we check whether you quote correctly, and whether such a document is even in the archives? Now it is possible to get into the archives and check. That is why in this book I use archival and openly published materials. The main emphasis is still on open materials, which are available to everyone. I want to show - look, listen, I didn't invent this. The Communists themselves say this. You only need to listen to them carefully.

Studying archival materials and open publications, I came to the conclusion that the transfer of millions of pairs of boots to the borders, as well as the transfer of ammunition, spare parts, millions of soldiers, thousands of tanks and airplanes - all these are not mistakes, not miscalculations, but a conscious policy, a process in which tens of millions of people were involved.

This process was initiated by a decision of the Soviet leadership on the recommendation of Marshal of the Soviet Union B.M. Shaposhnikov.

This process was intended to prepare industry, transportation, agriculture, the country's territory, the Soviet people, and the Red Army to wage a "liberation" war in Central and Western Europe.

This process was called by the short term MOBILIZATION. It was a secret mobilization. The Soviet leadership was preparing the Red Army and the entire country for the invasion of Germany and all of Western Europe.

The conquest of Western Europe was the main goal for which the Soviet Union launched World War II.

Stalin made the final decision to go to war on August 19, 1939.

Chapter 2 WHY DID STALIN DESTROY HIS STRATEGIC AVIATION?

Since there is a massive offensive army, the main task of the air army is to assist the advance of this army forward, for which all forces should be concentrated. Combrig Alexander Lapchinsky. "Air Army", Moscow, 1939, p.144.

Stalin could have prevented the war. With the stroke of a pen.

There were many opportunities. Here is one of them. In 1936, the Soviet Union created the TB-7 heavy high-speed high-altitude bomber. This is a review of it.

Major General of Aviation P. Stefanovsky, a test pilot of the TB-7: "The multi-ton ship with its flight data surpassed at ten kilometers altitude all the best European fighters of that time". (Three hundred unknowns. P. 83).

Air Force Major General V. Shumikhin: "At altitudes above 10,000 meters, the TB-7 was impossible for most fighters available at that time, and the ceiling of 12,000 meters made it invulnerable to antiaircraft artillery". (Soviet Military Aviation, 1917-1941. P. 218).

Aircraft designer V. Shavrov: "An outstanding airplane. On the TB-7 for the first time, earlier than in the USA and England, five-ton bombs were lifted". (History of Aircraft Design in the USSR. 1938-1950. p. 162).

Prof. L. Kerber: "The machine had a strong defensive armament of 20-mm guns and 12.7-mm heavy machine guns. The large bomb bay could hang bombs of the largest caliber... Inaccessible at the maximum ceiling of its flight neither anti-aircraft guns nor fighters of that time. The TB-7 was the strongest bomber in the world". (TU - man and airplane. p. 143). "An epochal airplane... Now we have every reason to assert that the TB-7 was considerably stronger than the famous American flying fortress B-17." (Footprints in the Sky. P. 202). Foreign historians agree with such assessments. John W.R. Taylor: "At altitudes between 26250 and 29500 feet its speed exceeded that of the German Me-109 and He-112 fighters". (Combat Aircraft of the World. London, 1969, p. 592).

Vaclav Nemecek: "This machine had a surprisingly long life. In the fifties it was still possible to find individual examples on the polar routes, where they were used for cargo transportation". (History of Soviet Aircraft from 1918. London, 1986, p.134), It is not necessary to prove that only good airplanes live long and fly long....

The TB-7's outstanding qualities were proven to Western experts in the fall of 1941. The arrival of a Soviet government delegation headed by V.M. Molotov to Great Britain and the USA was announced. It was assumed that the only possible way was through Siberia and Alaska. But Molotov on TB-7 flew from Moscow to Britain directly over occupied Europe. One should remember who dominated the skies of Europe in the fall of the forty-first to assess the degree of trust of the Soviet leadership in this plane. If Molotov fell into the clutches of Hitler, there would have been a high-profile trial somewhere in Nuremberg. And the crimes of international-socialism, which could stun the world for centuries, would have come to light. And it would have been revealed that International Socialism was committing no less atrocities than its bloody brother National Socialism, that both were worthy of the Nuremberg bench.

But Molotov was not afraid of going to the dock. And Stalin, letting Molotov go, was not afraid of a trial of his regime: Molotov was flying not on anything, but on a TB-7, what was there to worry about? And TB-7 did not fail. It flew over Europe, stayed in Britain, went to America and returned the same way, once again flying over German possessions with impunity.

In 1942, Molotov flew over Europe again and returned unharmed. After the war, a Soviet government commission analyzed the actions of the German air defense system at the time of Molotov's flight. It turned out that no fighters had flown to intercept the flight, no alarms had been sounded at anti-aircraft batteries, and the TB-7 flight had not been registered by observation posts. To put it simply, German air defenses were not only unable to intercept the TB-7, but in these cases could not even detect its presence in their airspace.

Colonel (a captain at that time) E. Pussp, who drove the TB-7 over Germany many times (not only with Molotov's precious body, but also with other cargoes), told us: "An anti-aircraft gun does not reach such a height with much aim, one could say, almost out of sight. A fighter plane there is also like a sleepy fly. Who will do what to me?" (M.Gallai. The Third Dimension. M. Soviet Writer, 1973, p. 330) So, long before the war, the Soviet Union had created an INEVITABLE bomb-bardier and prepared an order to produce a thousand TB-7s by November 1940. What remained to be done?

When the first TB-7s flew at unreachable altitudes, the designers of other aviation powers of the world encountered an invisible barrier to altitude: in thin air, the engines were losing power due to lack of oxygen. They were literally suffocating - like climbers on the summit of Mount Everest. There was a very promising way to increase engine power: use the exhaust gases to turn a turbocharger, which supplies the engine with additional air. Simple in theory - difficult in practice. On experimental, record-breaking airplanes it worked. Not on production airplanes.

Turbocharger parts work in a red-hot jet of poisonous gas at temperatures over 1000 degrees, the ambient air is minus 60, and then it's back to the warm earth. Uneven heating, a sharp difference in pressure and temperature cut the parts, and the grinding of the turbocharger drowned out the roar of the engine; protective varnishes and paints burned out in the first flight, on the ground moisture settled on the cooling parts, and corrosion corroded the mechanisms through and through. The bearings were especially bad: they melted like wax candles. It is good on a recreational airplane: out of ten attempts, one turbocharger will fail once - that's a recreational airplane. But what about serial airplanes?

Everyone was looking for it, but Vladimir Petlyakov, the creator of the TB-7, found it. Petlyakov's secret was kept as an extreme state secret. And the solution was ingeniously simple. The TB-7 had four propellers and outwardly seemed to be a four-engine airplane. But inside the hull, behind the cockpit, Petlyakov installed an additional fifth engine, which did not rotate the propellers. At low and medium altitudes, the four main engines worked, while at high altitudes the fifth engine was switched on and activated the system of centralized supply of additional air. With this air, the fifth engine fed itself and the four main engines. That is why the TB-7 could go where no one could reach it: fly over Europe, bomb whoever you want, and do not worry about your safety.

With a thousand invulnerable TB-7s, any invasion can be prevented. To do this, it is simply necessary to invite military delegations of certain states and, in their presence, somewhere in the Volga steppe, drop from the ringing heights of the Trans-Volga, FIFTY THOUSAND TONS OF BOMBS. And explain: it has nothing to do with you, we are preparing a surprise for the capital of the state that decides to attack us. Precision? No precision. Where would it come from? We're dropping bombs from sky-high altitudes. But we'll make up for the lack of precision with repeated attacks. Every day five thousand tons on the aggressor's capital until we achieve the desired result, and then other cities will get it. By the time the enemy reaches Moscow, do you know what will happen to his cities? In the air the TB-7s are almost invulnerable, on the ground the enemy will not get them: our bases are far from the borders and are covered, and our probable enemies have no strategic aviation... And now, gentlemen, let us drink to eternal peace....

This is what Stalin's diplomats could have said if the Soviet Union had a thousand TB-7s. But Stalin refused a thousand TB-7s... Is it possible to understand Stalin's motives? Yes, if you re--

To translate the thousand TB-7 into the language of chess, it is a situation when you can declare check to the enemy king before the game starts, and if your partner decides to start the game, you can declare checkmate to him after the first move.

If five thousand tons of bombs, which TB-7 could deliver in one flight, are translated into the language of modern strategy, it is FIVE KILOTONN. This is already the terminology of the nuclear age. If five kilotons are not enough, then ten kilotons can be delivered in two flights. And twenty kilotons is what fell on Hiroshima without much precision.

A thousand TB-7s is like a nuclear missile aimed at the enemy's capital. The power is such that for a potential aggressor, war loses its meaning.

So, with one stroke of Stalin's pen under the order to mass-produce the TB-7, it was possible to prevent a German invasion of Soviet territory.

I'll say more: Stalin could have prevented the entire Second World War as well. Obviously, in August 1939, he could not have had a thousand TB-7s. But he could have had two hundred, three hundred, four hundred and even five hundred. One flight of two hundred TB-7s is a kiloton. Having only two hundred TB-7s, the Moloto-Va-Ribbentrop Pact could not be signed. With only two hundred TB-7s, it was possible not to look at the position of Great Britain and France.

One could simply invite Ribbentrop (or Hitler himself), demonstrate what is already in place, tell him what is to come, and then simply and clearly state one's position: Mr. Minister (or Mr. Chancellor), our relations with Poland are not the best, but the German advance to the east frightens us. Germany's differences with Poland do not concern us, solve your own problems, but do not start a big war against Poland. If you do, we will throw five million Soviet volunteers into Poland. We'll give Poland everything it asks for, we'll start partisan warfare in Poland and mobilize the Red Army. Well, and TB-7... Every day. We can't provide five thousand tons a day yet, that's later, but we guarantee one thousand tons a day.

This is how one might have talked to Hitler in August 1939 if Stalin had signed the serialization order in due course....

To be fair, Stalin signed the order... But then he canceled it. And signed it again. And canceled it. And again... Four times the TB-7 started to be produced in series and four times it was removed from the series. (G. Ozerov. Tupolev's Charaga. "Posev", Frankfurt am Main, 1971, p. 47). After each order, the industry managed to produce three or four TB-7s, and the order was canceled. Again everything started and again was cut off... As of June 22, 1941, TB-7s were not mass produced. In four attempts the aviation industry managed to produce and deliver to the strategic aviation not a thousand TB-7s, but only eleven. Moreover, almost all of these eleven lacked the most important thing - an additional fifth engine. Without it, the best strategic bomber in the world turned into an ordinary mediocrity.

After Hitler's attack, the TB-7 was put into production. But it was too late...

The question arises: if Stalin had given the order to produce a thousand TB-7s and did not cancel it, would the Soviet industry have been able to fulfill Stalin's order? Would it have been able to produce a thousand of these airplanes by the end of 1940?

The creator of the TB-7, aircraft designer Vladimir Petlyakov (after Petlyakov's tragic death, the TB-7 was renamed the Pe-8) never doubted this for a minute.

Alexander Mikulin, who designed the engines for the TB-7, was fully confident that the Soviet industry could handle such an order. Deputy aircraft designer A. Tupolev, Professor L. Kerber, leading aviation industry experts S. Yeager, S. Leshchenko, E. Stoman, chief designer of the plant that produced the TB-7, I. Nezval, chief technologist of the plant E. Shekunov and many others, on whom the TB-7 production depended, considered the task feasible within the allotted time.

Aircraft designers V.B. Shavrov and A.N. Tupolev believed that a thousand TB-7s could be ready by November 1940.

The confidence of designers and industry leaders is understandable: the TB-7 did not appear out of nowhere. Russia is the birthplace of strategic bombers. I say this with pride and without irony.

At the beginning of the century, when the whole world was flying single-engine airplanes, Russia was the first in the world to build twin-engine airplanes. The world had not yet had time to appreciate this step, and the great Russian engineer Igor Ivanovich Sikorsky in 1913 built the world's first che-

Ilya Muromets, a three-engine heavy bomber. Already during the tests, the Muromets broke the world range record. In terms of range, armament and bomb load, the Muromets had no analogues in the world for several years. It had the most advanced navigation equipment for those times, a bomber sight and the world's first electric bomb thrower. For self-defense, the Muromets had eight machine guns, and there was even an attempt to mount a 76-mm field gun. In 1914, Russia became the FIRST country in the world to create a heavy bomber unit - a squadron of airships.

Having seized power in the country, the Communists sharply slowed down Russia's technical development, exterminating and expelling millions of the most intelligent, most industrious, most talented people. Igor Sikorsky was among the exiles.

Yet Russia's technical potential was enormous, and development continued. In spite of terror, in spite of communist oppression, Russia continued to be a leader in the field of heavy bombers. In 1925, the Tupolev Design Bureau created the TB-1, the world's first all-metal bomber, and the world's first free-wing monoplane bomber. The rest of the world at that time built only wooden biplanes. Already during the tests, the TB-1 broke two world records. In a short period of time, 213 TB-1s were built, and this is also a kind of record. This is several times more than heavy bombers in all other countries of the world combined. As airplanes were produced, squadrons, regiments, and brigades were formed.

And in 1930, Tupolev produced an even more powerful heavy bomber: the TB-Z, the world's first four-engine monoplane with a free-slung wing. Among the world's airplanes, both military and civilian, the TB-Z was the largest. No one in the world had such airplanes not only in production, but even in projects. As early as 1933, Tupolev began experiments on refueling the TB-Z in the air. The TB-Z set several world records, including high-altitude flights with cargoes of 5, 10 and 12 tons. The TB-Z scheme became a classic for this class of aircraft for many decades to come. The speed of order fulfillment is striking: production was up to three TB-Zs per day. (E. Ryabchikov, A. Magid. *Becoming. Moscow, "Znanie", 1978, p. 132*).

The Soviet industry breaks its own record - in a short period of time it produces 818 TB-Zs. Regiments and brigades are no longer enough. On March 23, 1932 the Soviet Union was the first in the world to start the creation of heavy bomber corps. In January 1936, the world's first aviation army was created, in March - the second, a little later - the third. No one else at that time had either air armies or even strategic aviation corps.

A fleet of a thousand heavy bombers is a strategists' dream, and for the first time it has been realized in the Soviet Union. Generals and politicians of all countries argued about the doctrine of General D. Due. But Stalin did not argue...

But that was not all: it was planned to rearm three aviation armies with the latest bombers and to deploy three more armies in the Belorussian, Kiev and Lenin-Grad military districts. (V. Shumikhin. *Soviet Military Aviation, 1917-1941. p. 185*).

While the TB-Z was learning to fly, while it was just being "put on the wing", about a dozen design bureaus were already engaged in a fierce battle for the newest strategic bomber, which would later replace a thousand of Tupolev TB-1 and TB-Z.

Tupolev himself offers an eight-engine Maxim Gorky. The airplane appears at parades, shocking the crowd with its size, and only a few people know its real name - TV-4.

Pavel Sukhoi proposes the DB-1 single-engine ultra-long-range bomber with an incredibly large wingspan. The airplane (under a different name) made several flights across the North Pole to America. America enthusiastically welcomed the Soviet heroic pilots, not realizing that they were testing an experimental bomber.

And Sergey Kozlov offers a twelve-engine "Giant", capable of lifting dozens of tons of bombs or transfer to the rear of the enemy landing units with any heavy weapons, including tanks.

K.A. Kalinin's projects are amazing.

Victor Bolkhovitinov proposes the DB-A heavy bomber. In terms of appearance and characteristics, it is a new aircraft, but it is simply a radical reworking of the Tupolev TB-Z. This is a class example of how to create a new aircraft on the basis of an old airplane with minimal costs.

The DB-A breaks four world records at once. It is the newest airplane, but it can be produced by the same factories that produce the TB-Z, without restructuring the production cycle, without changing equipment, without disrupting established technological processes, without retraining workers and engineers, without the usual reduction in the number of airplanes produced in such cases, and even without retraining pilots, technicians and engineers of strategic aviation. If time was short, it was possible to put the DB-A into production, and by the beginning of the Second World War to completely complete the fleet of strategic aviation. But then a real miracle appeared - Petlyakov's TB-7.

TB-7 outshone everyone.

By the time the TB-7 appeared, heavy bomber production in the Soviet Union was as well-established as Henry Ford's car production. Changing a model is a painful process, but it is easier than starting a new business from scratch. A country was a leader in heavy bombers during the terrible years when millions were dying of hunger, and when the economic situation improved dramatically, the same country voluntarily gave up the lead. When no one threatened the country, it took a piece from dying children, but built heavy bombers, but then Hitler came along, the smell of war came, and no more heavy bombers were built.

And the question is not whether or not they could have built a thousand TB-7s by the beginning of the war. The question is different: why didn't they try?

By the time the TB-7 appeared, the Soviet Union had established design bureaus capable of creating airplanes ahead of their time, an industry capable of mass production in quantities exceeding peacetime needs, opened academies, flight and technical schools, developed a theory of combat use and gained combat experience in local wars and grandiose exercises, airfields, bases, training centers, firing ranges were built, formations were created, personnel were trained from army commanders to flight gunners, from navigational equipment engineers to photo-decipherers of large aviation headquarters, pilots, navigators, flight engineers, technicians, motorists, meteorologists, radio operators, aviation medics, etc. were trained, etc. etc. Collectives and traditions were formed, theorists and practitioners were educated.

And after all this, the country, which was the only leader in strategic aviation, entered World War II without strategic aviation. By Stalin's order in November 1940, the aviation armies were disbanded. As of June 22, 1941, the Soviet strategic aviation had no more armies. Only five corps and three separate divisions remained. Their main armament is the DB-Zf, which is a great bomber, but it is not a strategic bomber. They could be used as transport planes, but they were obsolete as bombers.

And as we already know, there were only eleven TB-7s. This number was not even enough to man one squadron.

Without the TB-7, strategic aviation ceased to be strategic. Not only that, in the spring of 1941 Stalin organized a real defeat. Before that, the top command staff of strategic aviation was composed only of those who had distinguished themselves in battles, who had proved their right to command in the skies of China, Spain, and Mongolia. All commanders of aviation armies were Heroes of the Soviet Union. In those days this title weighed much more than after the war. The commander of the 2nd Army S.G.G. Denisov had not one but two Gold Stars. In those years, such people could be counted on the fingers of one hand. In the spring of 1940, Stalin introduced general ranks, but stars are not scattered: the head of the Air Force Headquarters - Lieutenant General of Aviation, Chief of the Air Force Staff - Major General of Aviation. With such stinginess, Stalin did not offend the commanders of aviation armies - he gave them the rank of lieutenant-generals of aviation. The commanders of aviation armies were equal in rank to the highest aviation chief and surpassed some of his deputies, including the Chief of the Air Force Staff Stalin trusted the leaders of strategic aviation: the commander of the 3rd Army, aviation lieutenant-general I.I. Proskurov became chief of the GRU before taking command of the entire strategic aviation.

But here Stalin decided on something, and the defeat begins. This topic deserves a separate study. And now just two examples to illustrate: Lieutenant General of Aviation S.P.

Denisov Stalin sent to Transcaucasia to command the aviation of a secondary district. He would then serve in positions that did not correspond to his rank: he would not rise above division commander. Lieutenant-General of Aviation AI Proskurov was arrested in April 41, subjected to horrible torture and liquidated in October. Colonel L.A. Gorbatsevich was appointed to command the strategic aviation. (MN. Kozhevnikov. Command and Headquarters of the Air Force of the Soviet Army., M., "Nauka", 1977, p.26). The colonel had not distinguished himself anywhere before (and would not do so in the future), but Stalin did not need not only TB-7s, but also commanders who had proven their ability to use heavy bombers.

There doesn't seem to be a situation in which TV-7 would be superfluous.

If Stalin intends to prevent World War II, TB-7s are needed.

If Stalin has decided to let Hitler start a world war, and he himself expects to remain neutral, then the TB-7 is very much needed as a guarantee of neutrality.

If Stalin is planning a defensive war, it is necessary not to break the fortified areas on the "Stalin's lines", but to strengthen them. It was necessary to give the troops an order to burrow into the ground, as it was done later at Kursk. We should have enclosed ourselves with impassable minefields from sea to sea, and while the enemy was gnawing through our defenses, let the TB-7s fly at unreachable altitudes, let them undermine the German economic power.

In a defensive war, TB-7s are needed. Stalin's resources are unlimited, while Hitler's resources are limited. Therefore, if the war begins, it is favorable for Stalin to prolong it: a war of attrition for Germany is fatal. And in order to deplete resources faster, it is necessary to weaken the military-economic potential by strategic bombardments. And there is no better tool than the TB-7.

If Stalin decided to wait for the German invasion and then launch counterstrikes (historians are very fond of this version - they say so: he planned to sit back and wait patiently until Hitler banded his axe, and then intended to respond), then nothing better than a thousand TB-7s could be imagined for a retaliatory strike.

The history of the TB-7 disproves not only the legend of counterattacks that Stalin allegedly prepared, but also the legend that Stalin was afraid of Hitler. If he was afraid, why not order the TB-7? The more afraid he was, the faster he should have ordered it. Let the reader agree with me: when we are afraid to go Wild Forest at night, we take a club in our hands. The more afraid we are, the bigger the club we pick. And we wave it belligerently. Don't we? And Stalin is being forced to take the cudgel. Stalin's personal adviser, aircraft designer, Colonel-General of Aviation A.S. Yakovlev testifies that the head of the Air Force Research Institute, Major-General of Aviation A.I. Filin was not afraid to prove to Stalin in the presence of many people the necessity of serial production of the TV-7.

To argue with Stalin is a risk on the verge of a suicidal feat. "Filin insisted, supported by several others. In the end Stalin gave in, saying: "Well, let it be your way, although you have not convinced me." (A. Yakovlev. The Purpose of Life. Moscow, IPL, 1968, p. 182). This is one of those cases when Stalin allowed TV-7 to be produced. Soon Stalin will come to his senses, his decision will be reversed, and again there will be daredevils to argue with him and prove ...

The question is this: why does Stalin need to prove it? If we all understand the undeniable advantages of the TV-7 and the need for its serial production, why can't Stalin understand such simple things? Meanwhile, it is clear to the most stupid that in a dark forest with a club is more fun than without it. If everything comes down to Stalin's stupidity, then TV-7 would have been banned in one fell swoop, and Stalin never returned to this issue. But Stalin changes his mind eight times to the exact opposite. What kind of doubts? This is so unlike Stalin.

To exterminate millions of the best peasants, the breadwinners of Russia? No doubt about it: sign the paper, and here you are - a year of great overkill. Exterminate the army command staff? No doubt about it. Sign a pact with Hitler? No problem: three days of negotiations and - corks in the ceiling. Stalin had doubts, hesitations. But let me be corrected: there was no such thing. Rejection of TB-7 - this is the most difficult of all the decisions that Stalin made in his life. It is the most important decision of his life. I will say more: giving up TB-7 is the most important decision anyone made in the 20th century.

The question of the TB-7 is a question of whether or not there will be a Second World War. When the question of the TB-7 was decided, the fate of tens of millions of people was also being decided... Stalin's considerations when he made the decision on serial production four times in a row are understandable

TB-7. But when Stalin canceled his decision as many times, he was guided by something! Why do none of the historians even try to speculate about Stalin's motives?

The TB-7 had powerful opponents, and it's time to name them. The General Staff of the Red Army was established in 1935. Before the German invasion, four Chiefs of the General Staff were replaced: Marshals of the Soviet Union A.I. Egorov and B.M. Shaposhnikov, Army Generals K.A. Meretskov and G.K. Zhukov. All of them were opponents of the TB-7. Opponents not only of the TB-7, but also of all strategic bombers in general, were many prominent aviation generals, including P.V. Rychagov, F.K. Arzhanukhin, and F.P. Polynin. An opponent of the TB-7 was Marshal of the Soviet Union S.K. Timoshenko, People's Commissar of Defense. An ardent opponent of the TB-7 was Stalin's aviation adviser, aircraft designer A.S. Yakovlev. And, of course, almost all Soviet military theorists, starting with V.K. Triandafillov, were opponents of strategic bombers.

The best arguments against heavy bombers were presented by the outstanding Soviet theoretician of air warfare, Professor, Kombrig Alexander Nikolaevich Lapchinsky. He wrote several brilliant works on the theory of combat use of aviation. Lapchinsky's ideas are simple and clear. It is good to bomb cities, factories, sources and storages of strategic raw materials. But it is better to capture them intact and use them to strengthen one's power. Turning the enemy's country into smoking ruins is possible, but is it necessary?

Bombing roads and bridges is useful in every situation, except for one: when we are preparing to invade enemy territory. In this case, bridges and roads should not be bombed but captured, preventing the retreating enemy from using or destroying them. Bombing cities drastically lowers the morale of the population. That's right. Who can argue with that? But the rapid breakthrough of our troops to enemy cities demoralizes the population more than any bombardment. And Lapchinsky recommends Stalin to direct all the forces of the Red Army not to undermine the military and economic power of the enemy, but to capture it. The task of the Red Army is to defeat the enemy armies. The task of aviation is to open the way for our armies and support their rapid forward movement.

Lapchinsky recommends not to declare war, but to start it with a sudden crushing blow of Soviet aviation against enemy airfields. The suddenness and power of the strike should be such that in the first hours to suppress all enemy aviation, not allowing it to take to the air. Having suppressed the enemy aviation at the airfields, we open the way for tanks, and the advancing tanks in their turn "overturn the enemy airfields". The targets for our aviation are not urban neighborhoods, power stations or factories, but an enemy plane that has not had time to take to the air; a firing point hindering the advance of our infantry; a column of vehicles with fuel for enemy tanks; an anti-tank gun lurking in the bushes.

In other words, we are not bombing areas, but point targets, many of which are mobile. It is to bomb not in the strategic rear, but in the immediate tactical rear, or even right at the front line. And for such work we need not a heavy bomber, but a light light maneuverable airplane, which approaches the target closely to recognize it, to cover it accurately without hitting our own - our own are nearby. You need an airplane that either dives from altitude or approaches the target at a gentle glide, almost hitting the treetops with its propeller.

If we intend to blow up our neighbor's house, we need a box of dynamite. But if we intend to kill the neighbor and take over his house, then we don't need a box of dynamite, we need a cheaper, lighter and more accurate tool. So Lapchinsky recommends to Stalin another tool: a light dive bomber or a maneuverable attack aircraft. A strategic bomber flies from distant stationary airfields for huge distances, but we need such an airplane, which is always nearby, which is based on any temporary ground airfield, which easily changes airfields following the advancing divisions and corps, which fulfills tankers' requests immediately. What is needed is a light aircraft whose pilots can see the situation for themselves and react instantly to its changes and contribute their share to the successful outcome of a fast-moving battle.

Vladimir Petlyakov, in addition to the heavy four-engine (or rather - five-engine) TB-7, created another - a small, two-engine, high-speed, maneuverable dive-bomber Pe-2. This was exactly what Stalin needed. And Stalin decided: "Build twin-engined and bigger in number." (A.S. Yakovlev. *The Purpose of Life*. Moscow, IPL, 1968, p. 182).

Couldn't both light and heavy bombers be built at the same time? "No," Lapchinsky said. - You can't." ALL POWER, ALL POSSIBILITIES must be concentrated on solving the main task: the conquest of complete air supremacy, that is, on a surprise strike on enemy airfields. If such a strike is made, there is no need to bomb cities and factories.

Stalin let them both be built for a long time, and then he realized that he had to choose one. And he did.

If the iron Stalinist logic is incomprehensible to us, the easiest thing to do is to declare Stalin insane. But let's look at Hitler. This is also an aggressor, and that's why he has no strategic aviation. Hitler is preparing a lightning seizure of France, and therefore bridges should not be bombed, but captured and preserved. German panzer divisions need the bridges for a rapid offensive. And Paris must not be bombed. Paris with all its treasures will go to the victor. Hitler does not need to destroy the shipyards of Brest, the tank and artillery factories of Cherbourg, Chamonix and Bourges, the aircraft factories of Amsterdam and Toulouse - they will work to strengthen the military power of the Third Reich!

For the "blitzkrieg" Hitler needs aviation, but not the one that destroys cities and factories, but the one that in one blow will cover the French aviation on airfields, which sudden strikes paralyze the entire system of military control. Need aviation, which will open the way for tanks and ensure the swiftness of their dash to the ocean. We need aviation that hovers over the battlefield, fulfilling the orders of the tankers; aviation that does not hit giant areas, but rather targets. For "blitzkrieg" you need a small dive bomber that carries very little but bombs accurately: a twin-engine U-88, or even a single-engine U-87....

Then the war went the wrong way: it turned from a fast-moving war into a protracted one. Cities inaccessible to German tanks appeared: London and Chelyabinsk, Bristol and Kuibyshev, Sheffield and Magnitogorsk. This is where Hitler could use strategic aviation... But there was none....

And Lapchinsky's ideas, expressed long before Hitler came to power, were used by Stalin. True, not in 41, as planned, but in 45. Stalin's Pe-2 dive-bombers and Il-2 attack aircrafts covered Japanese airfields with a sudden strike, and Soviet tank wedges tore up Manchuria. The country went to the victor. Secular de-sant units landed in Chinese cities not to destroy bridges, roads and factories, but to prevent their destruction. In such a war, there was no work for strategic aviation.

In the 1920s and early 1930s, Stalin needed strategic aviation so that no one would interfere with the free growth of Soviet military and economic power. From the second half of the 1930s, Stalin was increasingly inclined toward a scenario of a war that would result not in the destruction of Germany's economic potential, but in its capture.

In November 1940, Stalin finally decided to do against Germany what he would do against Japan a few years later.

Chapter 3 About Ivanov

We'll blow up a world fire on the woe of all the bourgeoisie, A world fire in blood - God bless us.

Alexander Blok.

A researcher sometimes gives his whole life to scientific search. And then one day fate sends him luck - he discovers the name of a previously unknown pharaoh. Exactly such luck fell to my share. In dusty archives I found information about a certain powerful but little known leader, whose power on one sixth of the land had no borders. True, my pharaoh was not from the forgotten ages, but from the twentieth. The pharaoh's name was Comrade Ivanov. Who remembers him? Who knows him? And in the meantime, according to the documents, the named comrade concentrated immense power in his hands.

Here is an example. On September 25, 1943, Marshals of the Soviet Union G. Zhukov and A. Vasilev.

K. Rokossovsky, Army Generals K. Rokossovsky, N Vatutin, I. Konev and R. Malinovsky received a top secret directive to force the Dnieper. The document begins harshly and simply:

"Comrade IVANOV has ordered..."

Comrade Ivanov had enough power to put five armies into battle at once. Or ten. Or twenty. The directive of September 25, 1943, was given simultaneously to four fronts with thirty-one armies, including four tank armies and four air armies. And this, of course, was not the limit.

During the war, Comrade Ivanov had at his disposal 70 general army armies, 18 air armies, 5 shock armies, 11 Guards armies, 6 Guards tank armies. And on top of that - NKVD armies, air defense armies, separate Guards airborne army, 10 sapper armies, etc., etc., and separate corps by dozens, and separate divisions by hundreds. And it must be said that the orders of Comrade Ivanov were obeyed by all marshals and generals unconditionally, immediately and at any cost. Paradoxically, but with such power Comrade Ivanov was little known even in very high spheres. Example: before the war, V. Dekanozov was officially the Soviet ambassador (in those days was called the envoy) in Berlin and deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, and unofficially - a Chekist from Lavrentiy Pavlovich's inner circle. So, for many years Dekanozov had no idea that Comrade Ivanov existed. And one day it turned out badly.

In 1940, a Soviet aviation delegation arrived in Germany. The Soviet comrades visited secret factories, including underground ones, design bureaus, inspected the latest samples of German aircraft, bought what they liked, and asked the embassy (in those days it was called Polpresstvo) and the trade mission to pay for the purchases. (Here again the question arises who believed whom more: the German gentlemen sold to the Soviet comrades samples of all the latest airplanes, submarines, anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns, while the Soviet comrades did not sell Il-2, Pe-2, T-34, KB, BM-13 and did not even show such things to their German friends). So, the Soviet delegation chose Me-108, Me-109E, MS-POS, Me-209, Do-215, U-88, He-100 and many more worthy machines. The Germans did not hide their secrets, but ours were not stingy, they chose twelve types, took two or three copies, or even five or six. In addition to airplanes, the Soviet comrades chose samples of engines, instruments, equipment and much more.

And the embassy and the trade mission had to pay. "No," said the diplomatic comrades, "this is not the way things are done: we must write to Moscow, coordinate with the People's Commissariat of Defense and the People's Commissariat of Aviation Industry, they will send the order to the People's Commissariat of Trade, experts will discuss the issue there, coordinate it with the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and we will involve financiers."

One impatient member of the aviation delegation said: "We'd better hurry up - let me send a cipher to Moscow. He wrote a text, encrypted it and asked to send it to the address: "Moscow, Ivanovo". Then the whole embassy rebelled, Comrade Dekanozov himself was indignant: there can't be such an address, it's like sending it to your grandfather's village. "But you send it," the one from the delegation persisted.

It was a long fight. Finally, the cipher was sent. Surprisingly, the cipher found an address in Moscow. Very quickly. And a reply came. Without delay. It seemed to rattle the nation. The reply was short and simple, like the sentence of a revolutionary tribunal. The Moscow addressee, Comrade Ivanov, roared so loudly that the airplanes were bought without delay, the bills were paid in full, and the precious cargo was sent by courier to the proper place.

Comrade Dekanozov and other responsible comrades realized who in Moscow was hiding under a modest surname. Of course, of course, it was him. Comrade Ivanovich himself lived and worked behind the Kremlin walls under the pseudonym Ivanov. Aka Vasiliev. Aka Chizhikov, aka Koba, aka Besoshvili and Dzhugashvili, aka Stalin and Stalin.

Stalin had many pseudonyms. Some were cut off, forgotten and erased, others remained. The pseudonym "Ivanov" remained until the very end and was used in extra-ordinary situations.

I am telling you all this for the following reason: one day, in 1936, Stalin gathered aviation designers at his nearby dacha, treated them with all the Caucasian hospitality, and then set the task to build an airplane (the best in the world, there is no need to explain this) called "Ivanov".

Work on the Ivanov project was carried out simultaneously by many teams, including those led by Tupolev, Neman, Polikarpov, and Grigorovich. At that time, the design teams of Petlyakov, Sukhoi, Arkhangelsky, and Myasishchev worked under the overall leadership of Tupolev, and the design teams of Polikarpov worked under the leadership of Polikarpov.

- Mikoyan and Gurevich, Lavochkin and Grushin worked for Grigorovich. Anything Stalin ordered to Tupolev, Grigorovich or Polikarpov was automatically extended to the vassal design groups.

In short, the entire Soviet aviation design thought is concentrated on the fulfillment of a single task. And don't think about cooperation. On the contrary: fierce competition - the strongest will win, and Comrade Ivanov has plenty of carrots and sticks. Needless to say, the Ivanov was a combat airplane; Stalin could not have left almost all of his designers to develop an airplane for civilian needs.

Any reference book on aviation history gives exhaustive material on what the Ivanov project eventually turned out to be, and communist historians focus on the end result. But I call my readers to look into another question: not what was realized, but WHAT WAS DESIGNED.

In the history of Soviet aviation there was only one airplane that was developed under Stalin's pseudonym, and the project's motto was not at the initiative of the loyal lower classes, but at the initiative of Stalin himself. Aircraft designer V. Shavrov testifies: "The motto 'Ivanov' - on Stalin's instructions (it was his telegraphic address)". (History of airplane designs in the USSR 1938-1950. M., Mashinostroenie, 1988, p. 45). The airplane has not yet been built, the designers have not even picked up a randash yet, and Stalin has already given the airplane his name. And this is the airplane on which Stalin is betting in the coming World War II, the necessity and inevitability of which he speaks constantly and openly. Is there any other airplane that Stalin devoted so much engineering effort to? What does the customer want?

Could it be that Ivanov is a strategic bomber that is being built to discourage potential aggressors from attacking? No. It's not. The strategic bomber has already been created. Let's remember: this is the same year 1936, in which Petlyakov completed work on the TB-7. If Stalin intends to prevent war, then there is no need to gather designers, no need to set them the task of developing a new airplane, but simply put into production TB-7. It should be called "Ivanov" or directly and openly - "Stalin". What a symbolism: here you can see the flight in cloudy unreachable heights, here you can see the indestructible power, the power of impact, and the warning to enemies, and many other things poets and propagandists would have thought up. But no. Comrade Stalin did not need an airplane to prevent war.

Or maybe Comrade Stalin believes that the coming war will be a holy defensive war in defense of the Fatherland and therefore ordered to create the world's best fighter aircraft to protect our peaceful skies? No. Comrade Stalin doesn't think so, he doesn't prepare the country and the army for a defensive war. I will not even waste paper to prove that the "Great Patriotic War" happened by misunderstanding, by mistake, contrary to Stalin's plans and designs. But what I do not spare time, effort and paper for is to prove the simple fact that Stalin was preparing for war. Prepared in a way that no one else was prepared. All the people of the richest country in the world for twenty years huddled in barracks, malnourished, jostled in lines, went to the point of cannibalism and corpse-eating in order to prepare the army for war. True, it was not a great war, nor a domestic war.

Look, among those present at Stalin's dacha is Nikolai Polikarpov. The previous year, 1935, at the Milan Air Show, Polikarpov's I-15 bis was officially recognized as the best fighter in the world, and Polikarpov already has the I-16 in the series and something in development. Polikarpov is the leader in the world race for the best fighter. Leave Polikarpov alone, don't disturb him, don't distract him: he knows how to make fighters, but don't throw him off the pace. The race is on, and every hour, every minute is worth its blood. But, no. Distract yourself, Comrade Pokarpov. There's more important work than building a fighter plane. Comrade Stalin is not interested in a fighter for a defensive war.

So, what was Stalin's ideal combat airplane, on the development of which diverts its best designers, both the creators of bombers and fighters? Stalin himself explained his demand in three words - an airplane of clear skies. If

it's not entirely clear, I'll explain it in a nutshell - a winged jackal.

In order to visualize Stalin's plan, we need to mentally transfer from 1936 to December 1941 on the pearly shores of Hawaii. A bright sunny morning. The American fleet is in harbor. At 7:55 in the harbor, a blue mast is hoisted on the signal mast

The "advance" signal is duplicated by all ships in the fleet. After this, the "advance" signal is simultaneously slid down on all ships, the bosuns' tune is blown, the horns on destroyers and cruisers sing, the bands on battleships blare, and at precisely 8.00 a.m. the fore and aft national flags float up....

This was always the case, but we were brought to the very morning when the ceremony could not be completed: at 7.00 a.m., the "preliminary" flags slid up and the first wave of Japanese bombers, torpedo-bombers and fighters came in from under the rising sun. There are 183 airplanes in the first wave. Of these, less than a quarter are fighter cover planes. Powerful fighter cover is not required in this situation. The Japanese air armada consists mainly of strike aircraft - B-5H1 and B-5H2 Nikajizima bombers and torpedo-carriers.

These are the airplanes we're interested in. There is nothing outstanding in their design and performance, but they are great in a surprise attack. The Nikajizima B-5N is more like a fighter than a bomber in looks, size, and flight characteristics. This will give it the ability to fly so low over the target that the pilots' faces are visible from ships and the ground, so low that a miss when dropping a deadly payload is virtually impossible. "Nikajizima" B-5H - low-end monoplane, engine one - radial, two-row, air-cooled. Some airplanes have a crew of three people: pilot, navigator, gunner. But most of them have only two people: airplanes are used in dense groups, like swarms of wasps, so it is not necessary to have a navigator in each airplane. The bomb load of the aircraft is less than a ton, but each strike is at point-blank range. The defensive armament of the B-5N aircraft is relatively weak - one or two machine guns to protect the rear hemisphere. There is no need for much defensive armament on strike aircraft for the same reason that strong fighter cover is not required: American aircraft do not have the time and opportunity to take to the skies and repel a Japanese attack. The B-5H is a clear-sky airplane in which there are either very few or no enemy aircraft.

The Nikajizima B-5N light bombers did a good job at Pearl Harbor, but that's where the heroic page closes. The surprise strike was not powerful enough to take the American navy and air force out of the war for long. In the following battles, when the Americans came to their senses, when the usual war without stabbing a sleeper in the throat began, the B-5N did not show itself particularly well. Production of these airplanes continued for some time. Only a little over 1200 of them were built, and that was the end of their story.

The B-5N was created for a situation where no one in the sky prevents it from working. The B-5N is scary to the weak and defenseless, scary in a group, scary in a surprise attack. It is like a pack of ferocious, bloodthirsty hyenas, which are neither strong nor fast, but have powerful fangs and act in packs against the weaker, against those who do not wait for an attack and are not ready to repel it.

What does this have to do with our native Soviet "Ivanov"?

And the fact that it's almost an exact replica of the Japanese air aggressor.

In the summer of 1936, no one could have envisioned what would happen at Pearl Harbor five years later. In the summer of 1936, there was no Nikajizima B-5N airplane yet. There was only a project, which was not publicized by the Japanese. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that Soviet designers copied the Japanese. Copying takes time. Even if it had been possible to steal the technical documentation (which is mountains of paper), it would have taken several years to translate it (from Japanese!). "The Nikajizima B-5N in Japan and several variants of the Ivanov in the USSR were developed almost in parallel: the first flight of the B-5N in January 1937, and the first flight of the Ivanov on August 25 of the same year.

Therefore, we are not talking about copying, but about two independent developmental processes that are very similar.

This was not all: Neman's Ivanov, Polikarpov's Ivanov and Sukhoi's Ivanov were built. - Each designer jealously guarded his secrets from rivals, but each Soviet designer had the same winged jackal in mind: a light bomber, po

looks, size and flight characteristics more like a fighter jet.

Each Soviet designer, regardless of his competitors, chose the same scheme: low-flying monoplane, one engine, radial, two-row air-cooled. Each Soviet designer offered his own variant of the Ivanov, but each variant is strikingly similar to its unfamiliar brethren and to its distant Japanese brother in spirit and conception. And this is not a miracle: all designers were simply given the task of creating an instrument for a certain kind of work, for the very work that in a few years would be done by Japanese airplanes in the skies of Pearl Harbor. And since the work to be done was the same, each designer would create the same tool to do it.

If all students in a class are given the same problem, all correct answers will be the same.

In addition, during the work on the Ivanov project, an invisible but authoritative hand guided those who deviated from the general course. At first glance, high-level interference in the designers' work is just the whims of a capricious baron. For example, some designers put two firing points on prototypes: one to protect the rear upper hemisphere and the other to protect the rear lower hemisphere. They were corrected - we can do with one point, there is no need to protect the rear lower hemisphere. Some of them covered the crew and the most important units with armor plates on all sides. They were corrected: to cover only the bottom and the sides. Pavel Sukhoi made his "Ivanov" in the first version all-metal. Simpler - said someone's menacing voice. Simpler. Let the wings remain metal, and the hull can be made of plywood. Will the speed drop? Nothing. Let it drop.

Is Comrade Stalin's taste strange? No. It's a steely logic: we make a surprise strike and crush the enemy's aircraft on the ground, then fly in the clear skies. An enemy airplane in the sky is a rare case. The pilot is covered from the front by a wide-bladed air-cooled engine, which is not sensitive even to cylinder breaches. It remains to cover the eki- page from below and from the sides. Our planes will rarely be attacked from above and behind, we can do with one machine gun, and there is no need to overload with unnecessary armor; we are approaching at low altitudes, the enemy fighter cannot be lower than us. Some designers suggested a three-man crew: pilot, navigator and gunner. They were again warned: two people would be enough - we would destroy enemy planes on the ground with a surprise attack, so the gunner would not have much work in the air anyway. And navigator work a little - we act in tight groups, like angry wasps: look at the leader, follow him, act like him. So we combine the work of the navigator and gunner, thus adding a useful bomb load. We reduce our defensive capabilities and increase our offensive ones.

There were differences between the Soviet Ivanov prototypes and the Japanese air aggressor. They were dictated by the fact that the main thing for Japan was control over the ocean, while for us it was control over the continent. That is why Ivanov was not developed as a torpedo carrier. However, its capabilities for launching surprise strikes against airfields sharply exceeded anything that any other country had in service.

In 1941, the Red Army used a very unusual weapon: ground-mobile BM-8 and BM-13 multiple rocket launchers, which went down in history as the "Stalin's organs" or "Katyushas". They fired M-8 (82-mm caliber) and M-13 (132-mm caliber) shells. The firing of several units was an avalanche of fire with a rattle, roar and rumble. Many German soldiers, officers and generals testify that it was a terrifying weapon.

The M-8 and M-13 rockets were also used on many types of aircraft, mainly the IL-2 and IL-10. But few people remember that rockets were originally developed for Ivanov aircraft, groups of which were to become "flying batteries". Rockets were a formidable weapon, especially when used suddenly by dozens of airplanes at once from extremely low altitude.

In the summer of 1936, the Nikajima B-5N had not yet flown once and little was known about it. There was nothing record-sensational in the design of the Japanese airplane that could attract Stalin's attention. But Stalin already in 1936 thought in the same categories as the Japanese admirals. Already in 1936, Stalin ordered his designers to create the type of airplane that would appear in the rays of the rising sun one morning.

This was exactly the scenario Stalin intended for the war.

Chapter 4

ABOUT THE BAD MOLOTOV AND THE GOOD LITVINOV.

Hitler is preparing for war... A strike against the West in the more or less near future could be realized only on condition of a military alliance between Nazi Germany and Stalin. But only the most reckless part of the Russian White emigration can believe in the possibility of such an absurdity or try to frighten with it. In order for the Second World War to begin, Stalin had to do the seemingly impossible: to make an alliance with Hitler and thereby untie Hitler's hands. Stalin untied Hitler's hands. He did not do it personally. Stalin had a deputy for this kind of thing. The deputy's name was Molotov. In Stalin's pyramid of power.

Vyacheslav Molotov was firmly in second place after Stalin himself. In those days, leaders at official ceremonies and in the press were listed not alphabetically, but by the position they occupied in the system of power. The list of leaders was a barometer of exceptional accuracy: any misstep - and the leader is scrubbed to the end of the list, or even kicked out of the Communist Olympus in the direction of the Lubyanka underground labyrinths. For many years, bloody struggles for power seemed to bypass the first and second places of the hierarchy, firmly occupied by Stalin and Molotov.

The struggle was for the third, fourth and all subsequent places. Lists of chiefs appeared almost every week: a parade was held, the chiefs were present at the parade, the list was published; after a few days reception - again the list is published, etc.

The Opposition Bulletin (Bolshevik-Leninist) magazine was published in Berlin and in Paris.

One day I collected a hundred lists of leaders in the order in which they appeared in the press. On the computer screen, I scrolled quickly through these lists. What emerged was an amazing kaleidoscope: Stalin and Molotov were immovable, and everyone below them was in a permanent wild fight. The pro-Letlar leaders leap up and down the ladder of power like devils in a round dance. From the seventh place to the third, from the third to the fifth, from the fifth to the eighth, from the eighth up again; and they disappear just as quickly, never to reappear on the list again. The impression is that someone's strong hand is shuffling the cards: Zhdanov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich are flashing: Yezhov disappears, Beria appears, someone else disappears; here Khrushchev shushed everyone, and now he was wiped off; here Voznesensky, Bulganin, Mikoyan are clashing... This wild dance is better perceived if the "Dance with Sabres" is played at full power....

And at the pinnacle of power, where Stalin and Molotov sit, there is peace and stability.

The division of duties between Stalin and Molotov was exactly like the division of duties between a senior and a junior investigator in an NKVD investigation team: first, the interrogation is conducted by the junior investigator, who, without further ado, whips the person under interrogation until the skin flies off, tears his teeth, beats off his liver, kidneys and whatever else is inside with a rubber stick. The junior investigator finishes his working day, leaves, and the interrogation is continued by the senior investigator: he is kind, sympathetic and even affectionate, he is surprised to learn that in these walls in his absence someone has violated socialist legality. The senior investigator promises to break up... And the person under investigation, feeling kindness and participation, is ready to tell his grievances... And then the junior investigator appears....

In the Stalin-Molotov tandem, Molotov played the role of a junior investigator, Stalin - a senior one. Here are Stalin's speeches in the run-up to the terror, at its height and afterwards. Do we find a ferocious roar, do we find a demand for blood and scalps? No. We find something else entirely. "They talk about repressions against the opposition... As for repressions, I am resolutely against them". This is what Stalin says on November 19, 1924. Or here is another: "You want the blood of Comrade Bukharin? We will not give it to you!" Comrade Stalin also says this at the XIV Party Congress. Some villains want the blood of Comrade Bukharin, and good Stalin saves Comrade Bukharin from the bloodthirsty perverts. How kind the senior investigator is!

I don't know what villains wanted Bukharin's blood, but he was shot on Stalin's orders.

The division of roles between Stalin and Molotov was maintained not only in domestic but also in foreign policy. During international conferences, Molotov demands, insists, presses. All demands come from Molotov, all concessions come from good Stalin. This is

was taken at face value: Western diplomats believed - all the anger from Molotov; if not for this hawk, everything was wonderful. And few people understood: if Molotov had died a sudden death, for example, before the Yalta Conference, Stalin would have grieved for a long time, and then still appointed a new junior investigator in his place....

Before the war, Stalin led the country through three trials: industrialization, collectivization, and the Great Purge. Each time, Stalin's role was that of a Supreme Being who looked down on what was happening from unreachable heights, while Molotov (since 1930 he had been head of the government, among other things) exercised day-to-day direct leadership. Stalin was in charge of everything, and Molotov was in charge where the most important event was taking place at the moment. This is how duties are divided in war: the commander keeps all his troops under control, while his first deputy is distracted from incidental matters and directs the part of the troops that performs the most important task.

The plan of industrialization was adopted by the Party Congress on Molotov's report (in case of a failure, Stalin was not responsible for industrialization). Collectivization was directed by the "Village Mission of the Politburo", headed by Molotov. Comrade Stalin was not responsible for all the dizzying successes either. The senior investigator should be given credit: he tried not to smear the junior investigator with mud. The mud fell on Molotov only in the most extreme, unexpected case. Whenever possible, responsibility was placed on the lower echelons of power. The blame for "overkill" in collectivization fell on "some district-level leaders".

Molotov's role in the Great Purge is undeniable. Yezhov was even formally just one of the People's Commissars in Molotov's government. And if you look at the behind-the-scenes side of the purge, Molotov's role in some cases is quite comparable to that of Stalin himself. Marshal of the Soviet Union G.K. Zhukov describes Molotov as follows: "He was a strong, principled man, far from any personal considerations, extremely stubborn, extremely cruel, who consciously followed Stalin and supported him in the most brutal actions, including in 1937-1938, based on his own views. He convincingly followed Stalin, while Malenkov and Kaganovich made a career out of it." (VIZH, 1987, N 9, p. 49).

The great purge was over. The blame was blamed on Yezhov, Yezhov himself was liquidated, the purge was called Yezhovshchina. Molotov is clean. Stalin - even more so.

Three stages have been passed. The result: the country is subordinate to Stalin, the army, the NKVD, writers and historians, peasants and musicians, generals and geologists, diplomats and everything, everything, everything is under control. Agriculture is in the hands of the Party: take everything from the villages at whatever price the Kremlin decides, or even for free. Industry is producing, the army is obedient, the NKVD apparatus is cleaned up and ready for new accomplishments. What next?

The third stage - the Great Purge - ended at the end of 1938. The country enters a new phase.

What now Stalin is planning, where will he direct the efforts of the country? Determine the main thing the direction is easy. One just has to look at what job Stalin would put Molotov in.....

In May 1939, Stalin appoints Molotov as People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, retaining his position as head of government.

It would seem that after the Great Purge the second place should be occupied by the Chief Ideologist or the Chief Inquisitor, the Chief Planner, at worst. But no. In second place is the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs. There can be only one explanation for this fact: in the course of industrialization, collectivization and the Great Purge, the Communists have ensured "equality and fraternity" in their country, and now their eyes are turned to their neighbors. Neighbors, too, must be provided with a happy life. This is the essence of the new stage, this is the meaning of Molotov's new appointment.

Objection: if Stalin was preparing a great war of liberation, why did he put Molotov in charge of foreign policy? It would have been logical to put Molotov at the head of the army or military industry I do not accept the objection. Stalin acted correctly War is only one of the instruments of foreign policy Wars are won above all by politics. You have to find good, reliable, rich, powerful and generous allies, you have to put your allies in such a position that they will help you in any situation, regardless of whether you sign treaties with them or not. It is necessary to present oneself in such a way that everyone believes: the Soviet Union is afraid of everyone, the Soviet Union is an innocent victim, the Soviet Union wants peace and only peace, if-

If the Soviet Union invades foreign territories, if Soviet Chekists shoot people by the thousands, it is for the sake of progress. Diplomacy should work in such a way that Stalin signs a treaty with Hitler, but that everyone considers Hitler the aggressor and invader and Stalin the victim. If the diplomats win, the generals have only to complete the job... But if the diplomats lose, if the world sees your country only as an aggressor who wants to conquer its neighbors, your generals will have a hard time.

Molotov turned out to be a great diplomat. He accomplished his task and won on the political front.

Without victory on the political front, victory in battle is either impossible or useless. Hitler lost in the realm of big politics before the guns even started talking. He should not have hidden the concentration camps, but shown them to the world, announcing that they were created for the sake of progress. We should have invaded neighboring lands, but we should have presented it as a cruel necessity. We wouldn't want to, but we have to. We should have looked for allies across the ocean, rich, strong and generous.

And it was also necessary to play comedy: Hitler himself is a good and kind man, and if everything depended on him. - It is a pity that next to him is such an intractable villain Ribbentrop.

In the realm of big politics, Hitler and Ribbentrop should have learned from Stalin and Molotov.

When one speaks of the appointment of Vyacheslav Molotov as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, one must necessarily recall predecessor Maxim Maximovich Litvinov.

It is customary to speak well of Litvinov, Litvinov's policy is remembered with a kind word: here, they say, there was a good man Litvinov, with all his soul towards the West, loved peace, wanted rapprochement, did everything possible... and then came bad Molotov and led the policy towards rapprochement with Hitler.

From the outside, it looked like this. But if we look into it, it turns out that Litvinov's policy did not and could not exist. Litvinov was one of the People's Commissars in Molotov's government, and Litvinov did not pursue his own policy, but Molotov's policy, or rather Stalin's policy. Litvinov did not speak on his own behalf, but on behalf of the Soviet government, of which Molotov was the head.

But in reality, foreign policy was determined not by the government, but by the decisions of the Politburo. The leading members of the Politburo were Stalin and the same Molotov. Litvinov was neither a member nor a candidate member of the Politburo and therefore had no access to the decision of foreign policy issues. His role was to carry out the orders of Stalin and Molotov.

It is also difficult to agree that Molotov suddenly appeared on the international stage instead of Litvinov: He was a little higher up, where in a puppet theater there is a puppeteer who pulls the strings and makes speeches that are perceived in the audience as speeches of puppets. Molotov always stood above Litvinov as a powerful member of the Politburo, as the head of the government above his minister, as the first deputy chief mechanic of the meat grinder. If Litvinov had dared to deviate even one step from the instructions of Stalin-Molotov, he would have ended up where many of his fellow diplomats had ended up.

Litvinov himself never claimed to be an independent politician and constantly emphasized this. One of many testimonies: I.M. Maisky in 1932 goes on a diplomatic mission to London. Maxim Litvinov gives Maisky final instructions: "You realize, of course," Maxim Maximovich explained, "that these are not my personal directives, but directives of higher authorities. (I.M. Maisky. Who helped Hitler. p. 13).

So said Litvinov a few years before the Great Purge. During the purge Litvinov did not dare to do anything arbitrary. And in general, he kept his head under Stalin's and Molotov's axe because he was not only obedient and loyal, but also had enough cunning to demonstrate this obedience and loyalty at every opportunity.

Litvinov was not chosen and nominated by Molotov for nothing. When Ukraine was convulsing in the spasms of famine organized by Stalin-Molotov, Litvinov's well-fed face was the best proof that not everyone in the Soviet Union was starving. When Stalin and Molotov, having robbed the country, bought military technology from the West, it was necessary to have appropriate relations with America, Britain and France. Litvinov was good at it.

Not because relations with the West were wonderful, because Litvinov wanted it so much, but because Stalin - Molotov needed technology. By the way, contacts with Hitler were not broken either.

And then it was time for the West's help to turn against the West. Litvinov was no longer needed, and he was kicked out. And that's when bad Molotov came out from behind the scenes and announced that the comedy was over, it was time to pay for the comedy, and instead of comedy, tragedy was beginning.

The story of the good Litvinov does not end there. In 1941, after Hitler's attack, the West's help was needed again. Litvinov was pulled out from behind the stove and appointed Molotov's deputy. The task: to establish good relations with Britain and the United States, to demand help. The good Litvinov coped with the task at hand.

Chapter 5 PROLOGUE AT KHALKHIN GOL

Socialism, which wins in one country, does not exclude all wars at once. On the contrary, it suggests.

V.I.Lenin, "The Military Program of the Proletarian Revolution".

On August 19, 1939, Stalin made decisions that turned world history. Someday the archives will be opened and we will find a lot of interesting things. But we won't find the main thing. And here's why.

"How many times have I told you - do what you want, but don't leave documents, don't leave traces." These are the words of Stalin himself. He said them publicly from the rostrum of the 16th Party Congress. At this point, the transcript records the "homerich laughter of the entire hall". The Congress laughed wildly - Comrade Stalin was joking. It is clear that Stalin was not talking about himself, but about his opponents, who allegedly follow the principle of not leaving documents and traces.

But the Congress laughed in vain. Stalin always attributed his own intentions, principles and methods to his opponents. Stalin would shoot his opponents later. And almost all the de-legates of the XVI Congress will be shot. And he will leave documents about his personal participation in minimal quantities.

No dictator can match Stalin's ability to cover up the traces of personal involvement in crimes.

Anastas Mikoyan, who broke all records of survival, tells us how it was done. He was a member of the Central Committee from 1923 to 1976, that is 53 years, 40 of them as a candidate or member of the Politburo. He describes meetings with Stalin: "Most of the time there were five of us. We met late in the evening or at night and rarely in the afternoon, usually without a prior agenda. There were no minutes or any records of these meetings. (VIZh, 1976, N 6, p. 68).

Stalin's referent, Colonel-General of Aviation AS Yakovlev: "At meetings at Stalin in a narrow circle there were no stenographers, secretaries, did not keep any protocol records". (Purpose of Life. P. 498).

Marshal of the Soviet Union DF Ustyugov during the war was People's Commissar of Armaments: "At meetings and meetings held by Stalin, the discussion of issues and decisions on them were often carried out without protocol records, and often without proper registration of decisions. (In the Name of Victory. p. 91).

In other words, decisions were made but not recorded on paper. Like the Mafia.

Marshal of the Soviet Union G.K. Zhukov - during the war was Deputy Supreme Commander-in-Chief, i.e. Stalin. "Many political, military, national issues were discussed and decided not only at the official meetings of the Politburo of the Central Committee and in the Secretariat of the Central Committee, but also in the evening over dinner at Stalin's apartment or dacha, where usually attended by the members of the Politburo closest to him." (Memories and Reflections. p. 296).

Colonel-General B.L. Vannikov was People's Commissar of Armaments, then People's Commissar of Munitions: "At Stalin's sessions and meetings there was a practice - to discuss issues and make decisions on them often without minutes... Hence it is clear that the coverage of many events based on documents alone is insufficient and incomplete, and in some cases inaccurate". (VIZH, 1962, N 2).

Hitler's meetings were famous for being crowded. Everything Hitler said was recorded for history by three stenographers and a personal historian. And Stalin's meetings are not just like secret gatherings of conspirators and conspirators. They were such in spirit and substance. They left no documents and no traces. Therefore, as Stalin taught us, let us look not at the words that are hidden from us, but at the deeds that are in plain sight.

If an inexperienced player sits down to play cards with a cheat, he usually makes only one mistake: he takes the cards in his hands.

In August 1939, British and French military delegations arrived in Moscow to negotiate joint action against Germany. The British and French governments echoed the mistake of inexperienced players. Having sat at the same table with Stalin's cheats, Britain and France lost the negotiations.

Neither the British nor French governments understood Stalin's intentions. Stalin's plan was simple: to force France and Britain to declare war on Germany... or to provoke Germany into actions that would force France and Britain to declare war on Germany.

Germany and France shared a common border, and the Soviet Union was separated by a barrier of neutral states. In any case, in any combination of forces, the main hostilities could be between Germany and France with the active participation of Britain, while the Soviet Union could formally be on one side, but in fact remained as if on the sidelines of the European meat grinder and could limit itself to sending expeditionary forces.....

Negotiations with Stalin were a loser for France and Britain in any case. The Soviets could use everything from the list of members of diplomatic delegations for their political purposes. If France and Britain sent high-ranking delegations to Moscow, Stalin could say to Hitler: look what's going on here against you, and sign a pact with me, otherwise... If Britain and France sent lower-ranking delegations to Moscow, Stalin could accuse Britain and France of unwillingness to "curb the aggressor": the Soviet delegation includes the People's Commissar of Defense himself, Comrade Voroshilov, and who did you send?

Having received the consent of the British and French governments to negotiate, Stalin immediately found himself in a no-lose situation. Two possibilities opened up for Stalin:

- or the Soviet delegation will make more and more demands and bring the matter to the point where Britain and France will be forced to go to war against Germany;

- or the negotiations would break down, and then Britain and France could be accused of all the deadly sins and themselves could sign any of the most heinous pacts with Hitler. And the Soviet delegation made demands: we have no common border with Germany, our troops need passages through Poland.

This demand was unacceptable for Poland and unnecessary for the Soviet Union. Unacceptable because the Polish government and people knew what the Red Army and the NKVD were. A little later, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia allowed Soviet garrisons on their territory and fell into communist slavery, which in another development could have been eternal. The Polish side's fears were well-founded and later confirmed by mass graves of Polish officers on Soviet soil.

If Stalin wanted peace, why would he need passages in Poland? Member of the Politburo, People's Commissar of Defense, Marshal of the Soviet Union K.E. Voroshilov stated at the negotiations: "Since the Soviet Union has no common border with Germany, there are no ways of coming into contact with the aggressor". ("International Life", 1959, N 3, p. 157).

So be happy! Do Voroshilov and Stalin lack the cynicism to realize that the absence of common borders with Hitler's Germany is a good thing for the country. Unless, of course, we intend to defend ourselves or, better still, to stay out of the war altogether.

But Stalin had no intention of defending himself, much less of staying out of the war. Stalin needed the corridors through Polish territory, on the one hand, for the Sovietization of Poland, on the other hand, the corridors provided an opportunity to strike a sudden blow in the back of Germany in case it weakens in the war against France, Britain and potentially - against the United States. There was no other use for the corridors through Polish territory.

There were other proposals from the Soviet side: let us start a war against Germany not only in case of direct German aggression, but also in case of "indirect aggression". Which is "indirect aggression" is known only to Comrade Stalin and his diplomats. If the Soviet delegation's proposals were accepted, Stalin (quite rightly) could demand that Britain and France act against Germany in response to any German act of foreign policy. The wording is stretching, and anything can be called "indirect aggression" if desired. The war scenario in this case was extremely simplified - in response to any German action, France and Britain were forced to act against Germany at Stalin's request. The Soviet Union would also have acted, but not from its own territory, but from Polish territory, which is convenient and safe.

In any case, the main fighting is between France and Germany, and then fresh Soviet troops through Polish territory deliver the final blows to Germany's back.

Britain and France, do you agree to that option? No? Then the negotiations are over, and you are to blame for their failure!

The French and British delegations, wishing to prove the seriousness of their intentions, informed the Soviet side of information of extreme importance, which should not have been communicated to Stalin: if Germany attacked Poland, Britain and France would declare war on Germany. This was the information that Stalin had been waiting for. Hitler believed that an attack on Poland would go unpunished, like the seizure of Czechoslovakia. And Stalin now knew that Hitler would be punished for it. So the key to the beginning of World War II arrived on Stalin's desk.

Stalin only had to give Hitler the green light: attack Poland, I will not interfere (and France and Britain will declare war on you). On August 19, 1939, Stalin informed Hitler that in the event of a German attack on Poland, the Soviet Union would not only not remain neutral, but would also help Germany.

Ribbentrop arrives in Moscow and on August 23 signs a pact with Molotov to attack Poland...

World War II might not have happened. The choice was Stalin's. Stalin had two possibilities.

First. Irrespective of the position of Britain, France and Poland, declare officially that the Soviet Union will defend Polish territory as its own. The Polish government does not want Soviet troops on Polish territory, nothing wrong with that. If Germany defeats the Polish army and overthrows the government, then the Red Army will enter Polish territory and fight against Germany. A little earlier the Soviet Union had officially declared: "We will defend the border of the Mongolian People's Republic as if it were our own". ("Pravda", June 1, 1939).

Words did not disagree with deeds. That very day, June 1, 1939, the deputy commander of the Belorussian Military District, Commander G. K. Zhukov was summoned from Minsk to Moscow. In the morning of June 2, Zhukov was met by R. P. Khmelnitsky, the commander for assignments of special importance under the People's Commissar of Defense, and informed that Marshal K. E. Voroshilov was already waiting. E. Voroshilov was already waiting. After a short briefing - Zhukov's way to Mongolia, where he defended Mongolian territory from Japanese aggression as he would have defended Soviet territory.

This is exactly what Stalin could do on his western borders: officially and firmly declare that an attack on Poland would turn into a hard and long war for which Germany was not ready....

In August 1939, Stalin had a second possibility - to delay negotiations with Britain and France, which would have been a warning to Hitler: attack Poland, but keep in mind that the whole of Europe is against you, we are sitting here in Moscow and talking about something, it is enough for us to block Germany.

But Stalin chose a third way: Hitler, attack Poland, I'll help you. Hitler attacked... and got war from Britain and France.....

Which is exactly what Stalin wanted.

On August 19, 1939, other decisions of historical importance were made. In distant Mongolia Zhukov prepared a surprise attack on the 6th Japanese Army. Stalin had agreed in principle to the surprise strike earlier, but now that everything was prepared, Zhukov had to get-

to make the authorization final. There were other options at the time, for example, for the Soviet troops to go into a blind defense and cancel the prepared offensive. An offensive is a risk. If successful, Japan would learn a lesson for years. In case of failure - the whole world will talk about the fact that Stalin decapitated the army, and it is not able to fight. In case of failure, Zhukov may be shot, but his blood will not wash away the shame of war.

On Saturday, August 19, 1939, Stalin encrypts Zhukov with one word only: DOBRO. A few hours later, Zhukov strikes.

But there, in Mongolia, at the time of the strike it was not the late evening of August 19, but the Sunday dawn of August 20.

The lightning war in Mongolia began this way....

At 5.45, 153 Soviet bombers under the cover of an appropriate number of fighters launched a surprise attack on the positions of Japanese troops. Immediately the artillery started talking. The artillery preparation was short (2 hours 45 minutes), but unprecedentedly powerful. During the fire training the Soviet aviation made a second strike, and at 9.00 tank wedges tore through the Japanese defense. Zhukov's plan was simple. Zhukov conducted a classic encirclement operation - a relatively weak center and two powerful mobile flank groups. The center only restrains the enemy, and the strike groups on the flanks, without getting involved in the fighting, bypassing the centers of resistance, rapidly go forward and join behind the enemy. After three days the encirclement ring around the Japanese troops closed and the defeat began.

The operation on Khalkhin-Gol was brilliant in conception and execution. Zhukov took a risk. But the risk paid off.

Zhukov ordered the airfields to be moved as close to the front line as possible. This allowed the planes to take less fuel but more bombs. The intensity of aviation use increased dramatically: planes took off before they had gained altitude, bombed, returned quickly, took bombs and took off again. And when the Soviet tanks moved far ahead, the air force could support them without changing airfields.

Zhukov brought hospitals and supply bases to the very front line - the supply of ammunition, fuel and everything necessary for the battle was uninterrupted and fast, evacuation of the wounded did not require much time, a soldier was on the operating table in a few minutes after being wounded. Zhukov moved his and all other command posts to the front line so that he could personally see the panorama of the battle, and when the troops went far ahead, he did not need to move the command post after the troops. During the preparation of the offensive, Zhukov almost completely banned the use of radio communications. Communication was mainly by wire, using short orders and commands that only two speakers could understand.

The operation was prepared in secret. Each executor received instructions only within the scope of his duties and had no idea either of the general plan or of the scope and timing of the offensive. However, many did not know about the offensive itself. Zhukov deceived not only Japanese intelligence, but above all his own soldiers and commanders. They believed until the very last moment that the defense is being prepared for a long period. If their own soldiers and commanders believed it, the enemy believed it....

The disinformation had abundant results: in all previous Japanese history there had never been such a terrible defeat. The defeat of the Japanese 6th Army at Khalkhin-Gol had strategic consequences. Japanese aggression in the direction of the Soviet Union and Mongolia was stopped and turned in the other direction... In 1941, in the days critical for the Soviet Union, Japanese generals, remembering the lesson of Khalkhin-Gol, did not dare to attack.

Khalkhin-Gol was the first lightning war in the 20th century, a "blitzkrieg" in its purest form. It was the first time in history that tanks were properly used in large masses to strike in depth. This is the first example of unprecedented concentration of artillery on narrow sections of the front. It is an example of absolute suddenness of crushing blows - for the first hour and a half of the battle the Japanese artillery did not fire a single shot and not a single Japanese airplane took to the air. Khalkhin-Gol was the beginning of Zhukov's ascent.

After Zhukov's return from Mongolia, Stalin entrusted him with the most powerful of the Soviet military districts - Kiev, and in February 1941 appointed Chief of the General Staff.

In this position Zhukov prepared the war against Germany. On the German border (only on an incommensurably larger scale), he repeated everything he had used against the Japanese army.

Zhukov created two heavy-duty mobile strike flank groups in Lvov and Bialystok protrusions, in addition - another grouping to strike Romania.

Zhukov moved airfields to the very borders and concentrated on them one hundred, sometimes two hundred airplanes. Zhukov moved hospitals, supply bases and command posts to the very borders.

Zhukov advanced to the borders hundreds of thousands of tons of ammunition, fuel, spare parts for tanks and aircraft. Zhukov almost completely banned the use of radio communication. Zhukov kept his plan an absolute secret, and few in the Red Army knew what was to be done.

In the event of a surprise enemy attack, all this would have had disastrous consequences. All of Zhukov's activities in early 1941 are perceived as a series of miscalculations and fatal mistakes. But in 1942 he will repeat all these "mistakes" in preparation for a sudden crushing blow of two flank mobile groups at Stalingrad. And again he would bring airfields, command posts, supply bases and hospitals to the front line.

The defeat of the Japanese 6th Army at Khalkhin-Gol, the "mistakes" of 1941 and the defeat of the German 6th Army at Stalingrad - this was Zhukov's style. He continued to act in this way, and each of his operations was a surprise, concentration of power, deep rapid breakthroughs. This is his handwriting.

In early June 1941, he was preparing against Germany exactly what he had prepared in August 1939 at Khalkhin-Gol. On August 19, 1939, Stalin gave the green light to Hitler: attack Poland; and to Zhukov: strike the Japanese 6th Army. On that day Stalin made other decisions.

However, Soviet historians argued that no decisions were made on that day, and in general there was no Politburo meeting on August 19, 1939. Every Soviet book about the beginning of the war emphasized this point: there was no meeting that day Marshal of the Soviet Union A.M. Vasilevsky repeated several times in his speeches to officers of the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff: remember, there was no meeting on August 19, 1939. Lieutenant-General P.A. Zhilin, head of the Institute of Military History, began his lectures with the statement that there was no meeting on August 19, 1939. Other generals, marshals, historians, ideologists did the same. If there was no information about the Politburo meeting, we should have said so: we know nothing about it. If nothing serious happened at the meeting, one should have said: there was a meeting, but innocent issues were discussed. But the line was different: there was no meeting! Believe us: there was no meeting! We believed it: there was no meeting! We raised the ar- hives: there was no meeting!

And to make everyone believe it, a twelve-volume official "History of the Second World War" was published. And it was stated: "On this Saturday afternoon, August 19, 1939, there was no meeting of the Political Bureau at all." (VOL. 2. P. 285). This was signed by: the Institute of Military History of the USSR Ministry of Defense, the Institute of Marxism-Leninism at the CPSU Central Committee, the Institute of General History of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the Institute of History of the USSR of the USSR Academy of Sciences and personally: Marshals of the Soviet Union A.A. Grechko, V.G. Kulikov, S.K. Kurkotkin, Admiral of the Soviet Union Fleet S.G. Gorshkov, Politburo member A.A. Gromyko, First Deputy Chairman of the KGB, Army General S.K. Tsvigun, Army Generals A.A. Epishev, S.P. Ivanov, Ye. Radzievsky, S.M. Shtemenko, Colonel-General A.S. Zheltev, scientists of world renown G.A. Arbatov, N.N. Inozemtsev, P.N. Fedoseev and many, many, many more. Tom consulted (and did not resent) members of the Central Committee, generals, professors, members, academicians... Among them were Marshals of the Soviet Union I.X. Baghramyan, P.F. Fyodorov, and others. Among them were Marshals of the Soviet Union I.X. Baghramyan, P.F. Batitsky, A.M. Vasilevsky, K.S. Moskalenko, Chief Marshal of Armored Forces P.A. Rotmistrov, Chief Marshal of Aviation P.S. Kutakhov, Chief of the GRU, Army General P.I. Ivashutin, and many others.

The Soviet leaders were clearly divided into two groups: those who were allowed into the secret and those who were not. Those of lower rank were indifferent: whether there had been a meeting that day or not made no difference. And those initiated at the mention of the Politburo meeting of August 19, 1939, suddenly turned into beasts. If Marshal of the Soviet Union A.I. Eremenko had horns, I would have been on those horns at the very moment when I mentioned a meeting of the Politburo.

It is noteworthy that there was no meeting of the Politburo on August 19. A few years later, I was struck by the fury with which Marshal of the Soviet Union A.A. Grechko proved from a high rostrum that there was no Politburo meeting on August 19, 1939. And I thought: why are you, Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union, so nervous, calm down. But he rattled for a good 20 minutes: there was no meeting, there was no meeting, there was no meeting! I was creeped out then: that's exactly how the murderer shouted in court that he had not been in the alley, had not been, had not been!

For 50 years, we were proved that there was no meeting. On January 16, 1993, Colonel General D.A. Volkogonov published an article in the newspaper Izvestia: there was a meeting that day, and he himself held the minutes.

We have our differences with Dmitry Antonovich Volkogonov, but I thank him with all my heart for his support. In my opinion, Colonel General Volkogonov performed a scientific feat by informing the whole world that there was a meeting that day.

It is true that General Volkogonov says that only minor issues have been preserved in the protocols. Let us read the beginning of this chapter again and ask ourselves a question: did Comrade Stalin like to put his criminal schemes on paper?

But the wheel of foreign policy was turned too sharply that day, but the course of world history was changed too abruptly, and too many bloody events somehow trace their origins back to that day. And so I remain convinced that decisions were made that day. And if we are not destined to see them on paper, we can see the consequences of those decisions.

With a single line in the newspaper, General Volkogonov exposed Soviet leaders, including Stalin, members of the Politburo, marshals, generals, and leaders of prominent institutions for hiding the truth. General Volkogonov revealed that all these Arbatovs and Inozemtsevs, Tsviguns and Ivashutins, Rokossovskys and Fedoseevs, Maltsevs and Kulikovs were liars and perjurers. They lied about the meeting of the Political Bureau not one by one, but as a group, i.e., by conspiracy.

If indeed on August 19, 1939 at the Politburo meeting only secondary problems were discussed, then should the leaders and marshals, scientific luminaries and the institutes they headed have lied so amicably for 50 years?

Chapter 6 ON THE MINISTRY OF MUNITIONS

A few words, comrades, about the attitude of Soviet writers to the war... We writers, hoping in the future to overtake some branches of industry in terms of quantity and quality of production, are not going to overtake one branch - the defense industry. First of all, it can't be overtaken anyway, and secondly, it's such a good and vital industry that its it's kind of awkward to overtake.

Mikhail Sholokhov. Speech at the XVIII Party Congress, March 20, 1939.

There were no ministers and ministries in the Soviet Union. The Communist coup in 1917 was made in order to get rid of state power forever, including ministers and ministries. The coup was carried out, ministers were exterminated, ministries were dispersed, and then they realized that the actions of people - even if completely free - should be coordinated. Instead of ministers they appointed people's commissars, and instead of ministries they organized people's commissariats and commissariat committees. In essence, nothing had changed, only bureaucracy had been added.

In 1946, when it became clear to everyone that the world revolution had failed, the Commissars and Commissariat were renamed Ministers and Ministries. But in 1939 the hopes for a world revolution were well-founded and therefore revolutionary terms were used: commissars, commissariat, etc.

For many years the People's Commissariat of Defense Industry was in charge of arms production. On January 2, 1939, it was abolished and replaced by four new Commissars of Defense Industry: Shipbuilding Industry, Armaments, Aircraft Industry, and Munitions.

The People's Commissariat of Shipbuilding was unofficially called the People's Commissariat of Submarines. Theoretically, this Commissariat produced both civilian and military ships. In practice, the situation was as follows: "By 1935, all major shipbuilding plants had been transferred to the construction of warships". (VIZH, 1982, N 7, p. 55). In 1939, Germany entered World War II

the war with 57 submarines.

The Soviet Union, we are assured, did not intend to enter the war, but had 165 submarines in September 1939.

Maybe they were bad submarines? No, the submarines were up to world standards. Some submarine designs for Soviet orders were developed in fascist Germany by the firm Deschimag. (It is said that Stalin trusted Hitler. It would be necessary to sort out who trusted whom more...). The construction of submarines in the Soviet Union was carried out using the most modern American technology with the participation of very distinguished American engineers. There is an excellent book about this by Antony Sutton "National Suicide. Military aid to the Soviet Union." (Stalin was said to be gullible, I think Roosevelt suffered more from this).

In addition to American, German, British, Italian, French achievements, domestic technical solutions were also used in Soviet shipbuilding. We also had talented engineers. Let us recall at least the M-400 ultra-small submarine, which did not have the usual combination of diesel engines and batteries. The boat had a single engine that ran on an artificial gas mixture. The boat combined the qualities of a conventional submarine and a torpedo boat. It could approach a target stealthily, surface suddenly and attack like a torpedo boat. Or it could quietly approach a target in an underwater position and attack from an underwater position, then surface and make a swift escape.

One should also recall the super-small submarine M-401 (laid down on November 28, 1939, launched on May 31, 1941). It had a single engine operating on a closed cycle. There were other achievements at the world level and above. From the moment of its creation, the People's Commissariat of Shipbuilding was engaged in purely military work. Not only that, many ships, which had been built earlier for civilian needs, were now armed and transferred to the military fleet. Only by one decision of the Soviet of People's Commissars of National People's Commissars on May 25, 1940 civilian ships were transferred to the military fleets in the following quantities: 74 to the Baltic Fleet; 76 to the Black Sea Fleet; Northern 65; Pacific 65

- 101. At the same time, the enterprises of the People's Commissariat of Shipbuilding switched to working in two long shifts, which actually meant the transfer to the wartime regime.

Result: as of June 22, 1941, the Soviet Union had 218 submarines in service and 91 under construction.

In addition to submarines, surface warships were built, and surface ships were purchased abroad. Example: before the war, a warship appeared on the Black Sea, striking with its graceful forms and unusual coloring. People who did not know what class of ships this beauty belonged to called it a "blue cruiser". But it was not a cruiser, but a leader. His name was "Tashkent". About the ships worthy of mentioning in the "Soviet Military Encyclopedia", it is usually said: "built at one of the domestic factories". This is not said about the leader "Tashkent", only the years of construction and the year of entry into service - 1940. The familiar words are omitted because the beauty and pride of the Black Sea Fleet leader "Tashkent" was built in fascist Italy. Again the question: who trusted whom more?

It is clear that the leader of the Tashkent was bought without armament. Mussolini would have sold Stalin the armament as well, but at that time there was nothing in the world that could match the characteristics of the Soviet 130-mm naval gun. Therefore, the armament was installed in Nikolaev.

Italy was not the only country that sold Stalin warships. In May 1940, the unfinished German cruiser Lützow was brought to Leningrad and placed at the Baltic Shipyard. Now Stalin was already in a hurry. The cruiser was a huge and complex structure, it would take several years to complete, there was no time to make changes to the design and install Soviet armament. It was decided to build completely according to the German design and install German armament. And Germany supplied the armament.

After reading this, you refuse to believe: May 1940! The German "blitzkrieg" in Western Europe. The British navy was blocking German shipping. Hitler was left to either fight against Britain, and for this you need a powerful fleet, or to seek peace with Britain, and for this you need a powerful fleet: angry Britain with a weak will not talk to the weak, and demanded

to get out of the occupied countries. Hitler was far behind Britain in the field of surface ships, and here he is at this critical time selling his unfinished, that is, his most modern ships!

Stalin's behavior is also surprising: he declared himself neutral, but builds a huge fleet himself, and even buys warships from the warring powers.

The clue to these amazing facts is simple: already in 1940 Germany was experiencing a terrible shortage of strategic raw materials, the sea routes were blocked, and therefore Hitler could buy strategic raw materials in sufficient quantity and variety only from Stalin. In exchange, Hitler was forced to sell technology and military equipment, including the latest airplanes, cannons, ships, communications equipment, fire control equipment, and so on.

Stalin knew about the critical situation in the German economy and could not sell strategic raw materials to Hitler. In this case, the war in Europe would have faded quickly. But Stalin wanted the war to escalate so that France, Britain, Germany and all the other countries would exhaust themselves with war. Stalin intended to take advantage of their weakness and establish his own order in a depleted Europe. That is why Stalin built his navy, why he bought war materiel wherever possible, why he fed Hitler with strategic raw materials.

One might ask, why did Stalin's two hundred submarines and the rest of the naval power not give the return that could be expected from the strongest submarine fleet in the world? The answer is simple - it was offensive power. It was a tool designed for aggressive warfare. In a defensive war it was difficult or even impossible to use it. At the XVIII Party Congress the commander of the Pacific Fleet, Flag Officer 2nd Rank N.G. Kuznetsov said: "The fleet should turn and will turn, like the entire Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, into the most offensive fleet".

Kuznetsov spoke at the congress right after Mikhail Sholokhov. Sholokhov would later receive the Nobel Prize for his great humanism. But at that time, at the Congress, he was included in the Central Committee together with Kuznetsov for his correct attitude to the military industry and other merits. Kuznetsov was also appointed People's Commissar of the Navy. This was the most talented of all Soviet naval leaders. After the war, he was promoted to the rank of Admiral of the Soviet Union Fleet. In Soviet history, only three people had such a rank.

Kuznetsov fulfilled his promise to the Congress - he turned the Soviet Navy into the most attacking one. But defensive warfare required other ships with different characteristics: submarine hunters, minesweepers, patrol ships, and net barriers. By Kuznetsov's order, stocks of shells, torpedoes, mines, and ship fuel were transferred to the German borders, to the Romanian borders in Liepaja, and to the river ports of the Danube. There these stocks were captured by the Germans.

Liepaja was so close to the border that fighting for the city began already on June 22. No one had prepared Liepaja's defense against a land attack. Among other things, three quarters of the Baltic Fleet's fuel reserves were concentrated (and lost) in Liepaja.

Not only was the basing system of the Soviet fleet oriented toward aggressive warfare, not only was the composition of the fleet based on aggressive plans, but also the armament of the ships corresponded only to participation in aggressive warfare. The Soviet ships, having powerful artillery and mine-torpedo armament, had very weak anti-aircraft armament. In a war of aggression, ships did not need powerful armament simply because the Soviet generals and admirals planned to start the war with a sudden crushing blow to the enemy's airfields and suppression of his aviation.

The war, contrary to plans, turned out to be a defensive one; we were not the first to be struck, but the first to be hit. The enemy dominated the air, and Soviet troops and ships had weak anti-aircraft weapons. For example, the leader "Tash-Kent" suffered a lot from the air strike in August 1941. It was repaired, in June 42 it was again badly damaged by the enemy aircraft, and in July it was sunk by the same aircraft. But this is only one of the examples. We will talk about the fleet ahead, and now we are only talking about the fact that the People's Commissariat of Shipbuilding was the Commissariat of Military Shipbuilding and had the task to build ships with maximum offensive power and minimum defensive power to make the Soviet fleet the most attacking....

The People's Commissariat of Aviation Industry also theoretically produced both military and civilian airplanes. But one can recall a dozen names of magnificent fighter planes,

bombers, attack aircraft, which the aviation industry produced by the thousands, but to remember the name of the civilian airplane so easily can not.

There was one airplane that could be considered civilian to some extent, and it was built not in our country, but in America. It was the world's best C-47 transport aircraft. It was built in our country under license both as a passenger plane and as a transport and amphibious plane. This is how it was used: in both military and civilian versions, but for convenience, all aircraft produced at the factory were painted green at once, so as not to have to repaint them later.

The People's Commissariat of Armaments needs no comment, but the People's Commissariat of Munitions is not original. It is original because even during the war, the most aggressive states, as we used to think, did not have a separate Ministry of Munitions. In Germany, for example, even after entering World War II, not two different ministers, but one, were in charge of armaments and ammunition production. And the Soviet Union in peacetime created a ministry that dealt exclusively with one problem, only the production of ammunition.

At the time of the creation of the People's Commissariat of Munitions, the Soviet Union was not threatened. Japan had a powerful air force and navy, but the Japanese land army was relatively small, in addition the Japanese army was fighting an unpromising war in China. Japan had limited stocks of strategic raw materials. Soviet intelligence already at that time reported to the government that Japan might decide to make a big war for the sake of capturing sources of raw materials, but the Japanese were interested primarily in those areas where the extraction and processing of these raw materials had already been established, because Japan would need them immediately. In other words, Japan would fight for control over the southern territories rather than go into Siberia, where resources are inexhaustible, but their exploration, extraction and processing require many years and huge expenditures.

As early as 1936, Soviet military intelligence concluded that Japan would be forced to neutralize the U.S. Pacific Fleet, which was the only threat to Japanese expansion in the South Seas, by any means necessary before taking possession of the southern territories. In short, Soviet intelligence and the General Staff of the Red Army did not believe in the possibility of serious Japanese aggression in Siberia and were not afraid of it.

The Soviet General Staff, the government and Stalin himself were not very afraid of German aggression in early 1939. There was no common border with Germany, and therefore Germany could not attack. The creation of the People's Commissariat of Munitions in January 1939 was not a response to German preparations for war. Soviet intelligence knew that at that moment German industry was operating in peacetime mode. The head of the GRU, Ivan Proskurov, reported to Stalin in July 1939 that Germany was not ready for a major war: if Germany attacked only Poland, Germany's stock of aerial bombs would be used up on the tenth day of the war. Germany no longer had any reserves.

After the war, Germany published the book "Results of the Second World War". Among the authors are General Field Marshal K. Kesselring, Colonel General G. Guderian, Colonel General L. Rendulich, Lieutenant General E. Schneider, Rear Admiral E. Godt and others. Comparing the assessments of Soviet military intelligence and the actual state of affairs, we must admit that Soviet military intelligence was mistaken. Germany's stock of aerial bombs ran out not on the tenth but on the fourteenth day of the war.

Probably the best study of the development of the German army during the Third Reich was made by Major General B. Müller-Gillebrand (Oaa Neeg, 1933-1945. Rgapiy/M, 1954-1956). The General reports (vol. 1, p. 161) that in 1939 the General Command of the Land Forces required a stockpile of ammunition sufficient for four months of war. However, no such stockpile was created. If the four-month reserve is taken as 100 percent, then only 30 percent of pistol ammunition was stockpiled, i.e., for 36 days, 15 percent for mountain guns, 12 percent for light mortars, and 10 percent for heavy mortars. The best situation was with shells for heavy field howitzers - they were stocked for two months of the war. The worst situation was with tank shells. In September 1939, the main tank of the German Wehrmacht was the T-11 with a 20-mm gun. They had 5 percent of the required four-month supply of shells for these tanks, i.e. for six days of the war.

Despite this, Hitler was in no hurry to carry out military mobilization of industry for the war. The German army was engaged in a war that was becoming first a European and

then the world, but German industry is still in peacetime mode.

Soviet military intelligence may not have known the full picture of the ammunition situation in Germany, but in the GRU archives I found reports on stocks and consumption of non-ferrous metals in the German industry for all the years before the war. This information gave a fairly clear picture of the situation in German industry.

For 50 years the Communists have been telling us that in 1939 war was inevitable, the world was heading for war, and Stalin had no choice but to sign a pact to go to war. An analysis of the situation in German industry in general and in the field of munitions production in particular suggests that the situation was not so critical at all. The world was not going anywhere and war could have been avoided. If Stalin had wanted to. And another thing: if the Red Army had sided with Poland in September 1939, Stalin would have been safe (and he knew it), while Hitler could have been brutally defeated simply because of the lack of ammunition.

But Stalin did not take advantage of German weakness at that point, and Hitler's strange game continued. Over the winter, Germany's ammunition situation improved somewhat, and in May 1940 Hitler inflicted a crushing defeat on France. There was enough ammunition, but if Stalin had struck Germany in 1940, Germany would have had nothing to fight back, for industry was still not mobilized. Then there was the Battle of Britain: German aviation was in the war, German industry was not. Then Hitler attacked the Soviet Union. And here he was terribly lucky - at the very borders he captured huge Soviet reserves. Without them, he could not have reached Moscow.

We already know why Zhukov moved strategic supplies to the western borders.

Capturing Stalin's reserves was a great success for Hitler, but he also had to think about turning his own industry into a war industry. And Hitler was in no hurry to do so. The war in Russia was a serious business, and the German army had to spend shells in unprecedented quantities. The production of shells in no way corresponded to the needs of the army. Major General B. Müller-Hillebrand cites whole pages of blatant statistics. Here are just randomly some figures out of many thousands of them. In October 1941, in the hard fighting against the Red Army, the German army used up 561 thousand 75-mm shells, while the industry produced 76 thousand of these shells during the same period. In December, 494 thousand were used up, and 18 thousand were received from industry.

This could not go on for long. The German army was saved only by the fact that at that moment the Red Army was sitting on starvation rations. Stalin was quickly creating new industry, and German generals persuaded Hitler to begin mobilizing German industry. Hitler only paid lip service to "guns instead of oil" On November 29, 1941, German Minister of Armaments and Munitions F. Todt told Hitler that "the war is militarily and economically lost. Todt did not yet know that Stalin would launch a grand winter offensive a week later. It was believed that Stalin's forces were exhausted. But even without knowing the severity of the situation, even before the Russian winter, the Minister sounded the alarm and demanded that Hitler seek ways to end the war, which did not bode well for Germany.

But Hitler was in no hurry.

In December, Stalin launches powerful strikes. In December, Hitler declares war on the United States. It seems that now he must begin the conversion of industry to wartime. But Hitler waits, and it is not until January 1942 that he decides to begin the conversion of German industry to war.

The difference between Stalin and Hitler is that Hitler first went to war against the whole world, fought for more than two years, and then began to mobilize industry for the needs of the war.

Stalin acted just the opposite. By all means Stalin tried to delay the moment of the Soviet Union's entry into the war, but the mobilization of industry and its conversion to wartime began in January 1939.

Chapter 7 A

PARTY IN SEATS

None of them saw the true extent of the organizational preparations being made by the General Secretary through the machine.

A.Antonov-Ovseenko, "Portrait of a Tyrant", p.46.

Stalin walked in boots, in paramilitary clothes. Stalin's party imitated the leader: they wore boots, dressed in paramilitary clothes. Let's look at the photos of Kirov, Malenko-Va, Kaganovich....

It was not only in appearance that the party resembled an army. Stalin explained its structure this way: "Within the composition of our party, if we mean its leading strata, there are about 3-4 thousand top leaders. This, I would say, is the generalship of our party.

Then there are 30-40 thousand middle managers. These are our party officers.

Then there are 100-150 thousand lower party command staff. This is, so to speak, our party non-commissioned officers." ("Pravda", March 29, 1937).

The Party reciprocated: "Comrade Stalin, Marshal of the World Revolution."

In the thirties the Party flourished: bloodletting was good for it, without it the Party would rot. At the end of 1938 the great party bloodletting was completed, and the flourishing party entered a new phase of its existence.

A new stage begins with the XVIII Congress. Some Western historians directly call this Congress the Congress of Preparation for War. This is correct, but only with a clarification: preparations for the "liberation" war. Anyone who has leafed through the Pravda newspaper of those days will confirm: everything is about war, but not a word about a defensive war. If defense was mentioned, it was only in the sense of a preemptive strike and lightning transfer of the war to the enemy's territory.

From words at the Congress the transition to deeds was direct and short. The structure of the Party: district committees, city committees, regional committees, Central Committees of the Union Republics - was the structure of state administration. At the beginning of 1939, military departments were created in all subdivisions of the Party structure from the district committees upwards. Through the military departments the Party takes control of the process of preparation for war. The military departments direct and control the processes of stockpiling, transfer of industry, agriculture and transportation to the wartime regime. Through the military departments, the Party directs the multi-complicated and multi-difficult process of preparing the population for war.

The Communist Party clinked officers' boots and generals' harnesses even louder than before. The legislators of party fashion recommended gray-green color, protective gymnasiums, overcoat cloth.

And the intermingling intensified: promising military officers were put to work in Party committees, Party leaders in the Red Army. At the very top, in the Central Committee of the Party, the military were given an unusually large number of seats.

At the beginning of 1939, the Central Committee was composed of leaders of the army, navy, and military industry. A little later, in early 1941, there was another recruitment of generals and admirals to the Central Committee. The line between the Party and the army was more difficult to distinguish: the Party directed military construction, while the generals sat in the Central Committee of the Party.

On May 7, 1939, by order of the People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR, the Military and Political Academy of the Red Army was given responsibility (in addition to its main activity) for the military training of high-ranking party leaders. Military training courses were organized for lower-ranking Party comrades at the headquarters of military districts, armies, corps and divisions.

On August 29, 1939, the Politburo adopted a resolution "On the selection of 4,000 Communists for political work in the Red Army".

Far-sighted comrades in the Politburo: they started mobilizing Communists even before mobilization was officially announced by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. It turns out to be interesting: On August 23rd a non-aggression treaty was signed with Hitler, and it would have been logical to carry out demobilization rather than mobilization of Communists into the army in accordance with the treaty, not to conscript thousands of people into the army, but to release them from the army....

The figure of 4,000 Communists is embarrassing: it's not much. However, this modest figure hides very formidable events. We are not talking about ordinary Communists! A worker who-

he foolishly joined the Party is drafted into the army by a summons from the military enlistment office. In 1939 there were about 180,000 Communists in the army, and by the summer of 1941 there were 560,800. In two years at least 380,000 rank-and-file Communists were drafted into the army. No Politburo resolution was required for this. By resolution of the Politburo, not ordinary Communists were drafted into the army, but the so-called responsible workers, that is, the Party's nomenklatura.

Are they of much use in the army, the fat-bellied ones? And by profession, they are not regimental soldiers, but administrators and bureaucrats. Is it worth paying attention to these grief-stricken soldiers? In my opinion, we should. They are not sent to fight with rifles in their hands, but to do political work. The lowest level at which the position of a political officer existed in those times was a company. If 4,000 Communists were sent for party work only at the company level, then 4,000 new companies should have been formed. However, already in 1939, a proposal was made to eliminate the position of political officer at the company level. This proposal was approved, and in 1940 the positions of political officers at the company level began to be reduced. The positions of political officers remained only at the battalion level and above. Let us look at the consequences of this downsizing with an example.

Colonel-General L.M. Sandalov describes a very small detail from the general picture of the secret mobilization of the Red Army. We are talking about an inconspicuous piece of the Soviet-German border, near which are serving four machine gun and artillery battalions of 350-400 soldiers each. Discreet measures are carried out, and soon there are no longer four, but five battalions in this section, but each battalion has 1500 soldiers (VIZH, 1988, N II, p. 7). There were somewhere between 1400-1600 soldiers on this section, and now (with the addition of only one battalion) - 7500.

There were 20 political officers (4 at battalion level and 16 at company level), now there are 5. After the secret reorganization, the number of soldiers increased 5 times, and the number of political officers decreased 4 times, because there is only one political officer in each battalion. The other 15 are savings. They can now be used to form 15 new battalions totaling 22,500 soldiers. This process is characteristic of the entire Red Army: the number of troops increases sharply, and political officers are utilized. They are immediately used to man new battalions, regiments, divisions, corps and armies.

In addition, political schools train thousands of new political officers under accelerated programs. The highest political staff is trained by the Military Political Academy. But the growth of the army is so rapid that there are still not enough political officers, and then thousands of previously trained political officers are called up from the reserve. At the beginning of 1941, for example, 11 thousand people. (History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union. 1941-1945. T. 1. c. 461). But political officers-reservists were also called up in the previous two years. (How many new battalions could be staffed?) Political officers-reservists, of course, were drafted without a resolution of the Politburo. But in addition to them, the Politburo decides to send thousands of its nomenklatura workers to the army. And if all this is taken into account, the picture emerges quite serious.

It is clear that the nomenclature drafted into the army was used at the battalion level and hardly at the regimental level. All this is to strengthen the political organs of existing and newly created divisions, corps, armies, and fronts.

But this is not the only and not the main purpose of the nomenklatura administrators drafted into the army. And the party is not so stupid as to make commanders out of them. They have another purpose: special-purpose groups are formed under the military councils of armies and fronts. Ordnance. We already know that motorized rifle divisions of the NKVD Osnaz were created for Sovietization of new areas. One division of Osnaz NKVD can bring revolutionary order in any district, but only professional administrators can manage the district. This is exactly what special purpose groups are created for.

On August 29, 1939, the Politburo decreed the conscription of 4,000 Communists, and 19 days later the Red Army entered Poland. In the "liberated" Polish territories, the new Communist administration worked like a good machine made by a talented craftsman. And in the "liberation" of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia there were no problems. In Finland there were no problems, and therefore no special-purpose groups of responsible Party workers were required, or rather, they were required, but not in full strength.

And it is not only responsible Party comrades of district or regional scale who are squeaking with the boots of generals. The members of the Politburo themselves are squeaking with general's boots.

There is a magnificent photo: on September 29, 1939, Khrushchev in a general's uniform, but without insignia, in the "liberated" Polish territories from the eastern bank of the San River looks at the other side, "liberated" by Hitler. Khrushchev is surrounded by obsequious commissars. Khrushchev's position was that of a member of the military council of the Ukrainian Front. It was to him that the special-purpose groups were subordinated. The front was commanded by I. Tyulenev. Khrushchev's duties: to look after Tyulenev, to supervise the lower commissars, to plant a happy life on the front.

"liberated" land. And Khrushchev looks at the German shore cheerfully and without fear.

Army General Tyulenev recalls what Khrushchev said at that historic moment. And he said the words simple and clear: "Our army is a liberator army, and this should permeate the consciousness of each of our fighters and commanders, and this should dictate its conduct on Polish territory. Well, and the Germans... - Nikita Sergeevich squinted merrily. - We will not dictate to them a line of behavior. If they do not prevail prudence, let them blame themselves...". (Through Three Wars. Moscow, Voenizdat, 1960, p. 132). This was published when Khrushchev was alive, under Khrushchev's rule, Khrushchev did not refute it and Khrushchev's censorship did not stop it.

The Communist Party's officer's boots squeaked. Nikita Khrushchev in a confused Poland on the new Soviet-German border. Everything that Khrushchev said at this historic moment became history: "Let the Germans commit crimes, then the Red Army, the liberator, will come to Europe...".

We can see how the liberating army behaved in the Polish territories and what it was guided by on the examples of mass burials of Polish officers. This was done on the orders of the Communist Party, "the main guiding and directing force", wearing officers' boots. And it is not about defense that the cheerful Khrushchev speaks on the new Soviet-German border, but about the coming retribution against fascism: let them commit crimes, and we will be the fates... There is nothing original in his words. It is pure Marxism-Leninism-Trotskyism-Stalinism.

I will not even quote Marx: his entire correspondence with Engels is imbued with one idea - let them commit crimes, the more crimes the better. And Lenin picked up this very motive: "Let the bourgeoisie be atrocious... The more brutality and atrocity on its part, the closer the tribute to the victorious proletarian revolution". ("Pravda", August 22, 1918).

This Marxist-Leninist thought was constantly repeated by Trotsky, not in relation to all enemies in general, but to German fascism in particular: "SOVIET UNITED STATES OF EUROPE is the only correct slogan, which indicates the way out of European fragmentation, which threatens not only Germany, but the whole of Europe with complete economic and cultural decline. The more the Fascists have in the eyes of the Social-Democratic workers and the working masses in general the appearance of the offensive side and we of the defensive side, the better our chances will be". ("Bulletin of the Opposition", November-December 1930, N17-18, p. 53).

The idea is clear: if Europe is not united and Sovietized, poverty and degeneration await it, but let the fascists attack first... This was said before Hitler came to power, and it was said about German fascism. Trotsky disagreed with Stalin and his courtiers, but only in details. The central idea of the Icebreaker of the Revolution is here expressed as clearly in Lenin as in Stalin.

The Communist Party did not put on its boots in August 1939 for nothing, and it has no intention of taking them off a month later on the banks of the San River. Khrushchev in September 1939 was saying what the founders before him had said. The difference is that Khrushchev spoke not in the quiet of his office, but on the German frontier.

On March 13, 1940, the Politburo adopted the Resolution "On military retraining, re-certification of workers of party committees and on the procedure for their mobilization in the Red Army". Obviously, the decree was secret at that time. It was only partially published in 1969. (CPSU on the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union. Documents. Moscow, 1969, p. 296-297).

According to this decree, "responsible employees of the apparatus of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (b) are on the personal records of the People's Commissariat of Defense and the People's Commissariat of the Navy and are mobilized to work in the Red Army and the Red Army and the Red Army by decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (b) on the recommendation of the People's Commissariat of Defense, the People's Commissariat of the Navy and the personnel department of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (b)...". Paragraph four of the decree ordered the People's Commissariat of Defense to "recertify and assign military ranks to workers of party committees". Army General Epishev reports that during the year about 40 thousand party workers were retrained. (Party and Army. Moscow, IPL, 1980, p. 163).

It was done quietly, without publicity. The result: the entire Party leadership was retrained, re-certified and given military ranks; the entire nomenclature was placed on personal military registration. Any Party leader, starting with the "responsible workers of the Central Committee", could be taken away by the Red Army at any time, but only after asking Comrade Stalin's permission. Comrade Stalin did not refuse.

Nomenklatura workers are taken into the army one by one, in small and medium-sized groups. One could not see from the outside: one was taken there, one was taken here. Then suddenly - a resolution of the Politburo of June 17, 1941: "On the selection of 3700 Communists for political work in the Red Army". Soviet troops were being concentrated on the borders of Germany and Romania, just like in August 1939 on the borders of Poland. In 1939, 19 days after the decree on the recruitment of the nomenklatura into the Red Army, the Red Army struck.

The scenario repeats itself. If we count 19 days from the date of the new decree, we will just hit July 6, 1941. This is the date I mentioned earlier. On that day the Red Army was to strike Germany and Romania. 19 days is not a coincidence. Plans are made in advance for all the previous and following days. Time is set, like before a rocket launch. Hundreds of different actions and operations are carried out according to a pre-determined schedule, and for each action in the schedule the time is precisely defined. According to their calculations and plans on the day of "M-19" (i.e. June 17, 1941) it is necessary to send the nomenclature to the army. This mechanism of counting down the days worked out on exercises and previous "liberations" In June 1941, it is again put in motion. The detonator of the mine planted under Europe was already counting down the days.....

The decree, like all others of its kind, was secret. Its existence became known many years after the end of the war. And even then, the title was published, but the text was hidden. But a little more is known about this recruitment than about the recruitment of 4,000 Communists in August 1939. For example, it is known that Leonid Brezhnev, the secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk Regional Committee for Military Industry, was in this recruitment.

Brezhnev asked to join the army on the morning of June 22, 1941. His request was immediately granted. A minimum decision of the Central Committee was required to grant such a request. It is doubtful that the Central Committee on Sunday morning, June 22, could make decisions quickly and promptly. The speed with which Brezhnev's fate was decided can only be explained by the fact that the issue was decided in advance. On June 22, Brezhnev was only confirmed: act according to the instructions received earlier. Brezhnev was placed at the disposal of the Military Council of the Southern Front.

The decision to create the Southern Front was approved by Stalin on June 21, 1941, and all the preliminary work was done in advance. I was particularly interested in the Southern Front. It was created to strike at Romania, to seize the Ploesti oil fields. Stalin appointed the same Ivan Tyulenev, with whom Khrushchev had shared his thoughts on the future of Europe on the new German border in September 1939, to command the front. In the summer of 1941, Tyulenev already had five general stars. In Poland, during the "liberation campaign", he showed himself well, and here was a new job - Romania.

The Red Army's preparation for the "liberation campaigns" in 1939 and 1941 followed the same program. However, in 1941 Hitler struck a preemptive strike, and the campaign did not take place. In 1941, as in 1939, special-purpose groups - Osnaz - were formed under the military councils of the fronts from party bureaucrats. The task was to carry out Sovietization. After the German attack, the special-purpose groups remained inactive for several months (they were not needed on their own territory in a defensive war). When it became finally clear that the "liberation" war had failed, the special-purpose groups were disbanded. Party administrators found other jobs in the army.

I was particularly interested in Sovietization groups, and in the archives I found a list of a group of special-

The group includes, among others, Leonid Brezhnev, future General Secretary and Marshal of the Soviet Union. Among others in the group was Leonid Brezhnev, the future General Secretary and Marshal of the Soviet Union. It was frustrating to the point of tears: it was impossible to remove the copy in the archive, because the discovery did not correspond to the subject of my research, which I was conducting to divert vigilantes' eyes. I wanted to tear out the page: my conscience did not protest in that situation - all the same, the document would lie unclaimed in the archival dust for a hundred years, and in that case nobody would need it, and I might bring it to people. But I didn't tear out that page and for many years I regretted it, cursing myself for cowardice and indecision. And if you tell that Brezhnev was in a group of responsible workers who were to establish a happy life in Russia, but do not provide evidence, who would believe it? Brezhnev himself did not intend to write memoirs in the early 70s, and even if he had, one could not hope that he would remember about the Osnaz group.

Then Brezhnev's memoirs appeared. I grabbed the book with the hope that maybe he would remember about the Special Purpose Group. No. He didn't.

Another 4 years passed, and appeared a colorful book "Eighteenth in the battles for the Motherland. The Battle Path of the 18th Army". The book was prepared by the Institute of Military History with a clear intention to please Brezhnev. The book was published while Brezhnev was alive. The book passed both the military censorship and the Central Committee censorship. And in the book, black and white on page 11: "Until mid-September 1941, Leonid Ilyich was a member of a special-purpose group under the Military Council of the Southern Front.

Brezhnev soon passed away. Not many people read page 11. And the book itself is not a bestseller: even without it, the biography of dear Leonid Ilyich is boring. But in my opinion, even in such a gray biography you can find amazing moments.

There is an expression in English: "dressed to kill". It is used in a figurative sense. To describe the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the pre-war years, this expression can be used literally.

The Communist Party was transformed from a paramilitary to a purely military organization. Party leaders at the top, middle and lower levels, including Stalin, Khrushchev and the then little-known Brezhnev, were all mobilized for the "liberation" war.

Chapter 8 ALL THE WAY

*Stalin proved to be a rare strategist, a planner of history, a phenomenal tactician,
organizing victories under foreign banners and by foreign hands.*

A.Avtorkhanov. "The Origins of Partyocracy", p.356

There was only one person whom Stalin called by name and patronymic. His name was Boris Mikhailovich Shaposhnikov, his military rank was Marshal of the Soviet Union and his position was Chief of the General Staff.

All the others were commonly called: Comrade Yezhov, Comrade Beria, Comrade Malenkov, Comrade Zhdanov."

The exclusivity of Shaposhnikov's position was emphasized by Stalin even earlier, when Shaposhnikov did not yet have the rank of Marshal, when he was not yet Chief of the General Staff. Stalin called Marshals: Comrade Tukhachevsky, Comrade Blucher, Comrade Egorov. And he called Shaposhnikov, who was not yet at such a height, in a friendly, human way.

Admiral of the Navy of the Soviet Union NG Kuznetsov describes it as follows: "Stalin did not call anyone by name and patronymic. Even at home, he called his guests by their last name and always added the word "comrade". And he was also addressed only in this way: "Comrade Stalin". If a person who did not know this habit, referring, for example, to A.A. Zhdanov, would say:

– Here Andrei Alexandrovich has such an opinion ... Stalin, of course, guessing who we are talking about, necessarily asked:

– And who is Andrei Alexandrovich? There was an exception only for B.M. Shaposhnikov. He always called him Boris Mikhailovich." (On the Eve. p. 280).

Chief of the General Staff Marshal of the Soviet Union B.M.SHAPOSHNIKOV.

The exclusivity of Shaposhnikov's position was explained simply. He was the author of the book

"The Brain of the Army." This book is about how the General Staff works. The last, third part came out in 1929, and as long as the Soviet Army existed, this book was the textbook for every Soviet officer and general. On Lenin's desk was always the book "Psychology of the Crowd", and on Stalin's desk was a model of a small silver airplane with the inscription "Stalin's March" and Shaposhnikov's book "The Brain of the Army".

The success of Shaposhnikov's book lies in the clarity of the material, the crystal clarity of the evidence, and the ability to explain the most complex problems in simple, understandable language. The strongest part of the book is the third and final part. In the third part, Shaposhnikov explores the issues of mobilization.

It is a thankless task to retell the works of others, especially those of a prominent military theorist. But I have to do it, because Shaposhnikov's theory is the key to understanding subsequent events, including the Second World War and all its consequences.

The theory was simple, clear, logical, and undoubtedly - correct. Stalin understood it, evaluated it and reported it as the basis of his strategy. That is why, reading the works of Shaposhnikov, his associates and opponents, understanding the course of their thought, we begin to understand Stalin's moves, which, at first glance, seem incomprehensible and inexplicable.

If you squeeze the most important thing out of the theory of mobilization and explain it to a person from the street, the essence of it is this:

1. Winning the war requires the efforts of not only the entire army, but also the entire country, the entire population, industry, transportation, agriculture, etc.

2. A country cannot be in constant and complete readiness for war, any more than a man can hold a gun in each hand at all times. If he holds them all the time, he cannot do anything else. In the same way, a country cannot be in constant readiness for war and spend all its energies in preparation for war. Constant concentration of the forces of society on war preparation ruins the country. Therefore, in peacetime the army and military industry must eat the minimum. However, it is necessary to prepare the country, its people, government apparatus, industry, transportation, agriculture, communication systems, ideological apparatus, etc. for the fastest and most complete transition from the regime of peaceful life to the regime of war.

3. Mobilization is the transfer of an entire country from a peacetime to a military state. Mobilization is irreversible and irrevocable. Figuratively speaking, mobilization is about the same as throwing your arm down sharply, unholstering it, pulling out a gun and pointing it at the enemy while simultaneously pulling the trigger.

4. Mobilization and war are inseparable. If you draw your gun, point it at the enemy and pull the trigger, you must shoot. For as soon as you start mobilizing, the enemy starts his mobilization. You draw your gun and point it at him, and he draws his gun and points it at you, trying to beat you by a fraction of a second. If you're a fraction of a second late, he'll kill you.

5. You can't play with mobilization: if you often grab your guns and point them at your neighbors while pulling the triggers, it won't end well for you.

6. Having decided to mobilize, one must firmly go all the way to the end - to start the war.

7. Mobilization cannot be partial. Mobilization is a process like pregnancy. A woman cannot be a little bit pregnant. The question is yes or no. This is the same way the question is posed in the state: do we or do we not transfer the entire state apparatus, industry, transportation, armed forces, population and all the resources of the state to the needs of war.

These thoughts were expressed in different sequences by different authors. B.M. Shaposhnikov differs from all his predecessors only in that he expressed himself very clearly, briefly and categorically: "Mobilization is not only a sign of war, but also the war itself. The order of the government to declare mobilization is a de facto declaration of war". "In modern conditions, the mobilizing state must make a firm decision in advance to wage war". "General mobilization is understood as the fact that there can be no return to a state of peace." "We consider only general mobilization to be an appropriate type of mobilization, as the exertion of all forces and means necessary to achieve victory".

The book concludes with a strong statement: "Mobilization is war, and there is no other way of understanding-

We cannot conceive of it.

Stalin not only shared Shaposhnikov's views, Stalin had the same views. Stalin made no distinction between the process of seizing power in his own country and in a neighboring country. He knew how to seize power in his own country and prepared to seize it in neighboring countries as well. Stalin did not keep his art secret. On the contrary, he made his art available to the masses.

In the book "On the Foundations of Leninism" Stalin proves that in the seizure of power games are unacceptable. Either we seize it or we don't. Once you take up a cause, you have to go all the way to the end. This is in line with the ideas of Niccolo Machiavelli: either we strike a fatal blow or we do not strike any, that is, we go to the end, there can be no intermediate decisions in politics and strategy.

This is in line with Shaposhnikov's ideas: either we do not mobilize, or we carry out full mobilization and enter the war - there can be no private, intermediate positions.

A man in the Wild West, who had not read Machiavelli, also knew that for the sake of a joke, you can not grab a gun: either it is in the holster, or it must be snatched and beaten to death. That is why Stalin not only says that, having decided on a great cause, you must go to the end, but in the text also emphasizes these words.

Not only in words, but in every deed Stalin went to the end. For a long time, Stalin seemed indifferent to the prosperity of the Russian countryside, which was getting rich and out of control. Rich means independent. Stalin did not seem to care. And then he decided to do something great: to bring the village to its knees, even if he had to break its back. He did. He broke the backbone. And that year was officially called the year of the great turning point.

For a long time, Stalin seemed not to be interested in the army's affairs. Then he decided to fix the army. And he went all the way. There's nowhere else to go.

If Stalin decided to eliminate the opposition, he brought the matter to the end, completing the extermination of political enemies with a victorious blow to Trotsky's skull with an ice pick. After the Great Purge, Stalin's main interest - outward. In August 1939, Stalin decided to do something.

Chapter 9 MOST FAVORABLE OPTION

It is necessary that the effect of surprise be so overwhelming that the enemy is deprived of the material possibility of organizing his defense. In other words, the entry into the war must acquire the character of a deafening overwhelming blow.

Combrig T.S.Isserson. 1940 г.

In peacetime, the army of any state cannot exceed one percent of the total population. If we approach or pass this fateful threshold, the economy will stagnate, the pace of development will slow down, the state will become poorer, weaker and, eventually, it will be removed from its leading role in world affairs.

Before the outbreak of the First World War, the population of the Russian Empire amounted to 180 million people. The peacetime army numbered 1423,000. The largest peacetime army in the world. To the government's credit, it realized the dangers of increasing the army further.

The army not only takes one and a half million healthy and strong workers out of the economy, but also, and this is the main thing, turns them from workers into consumers. A soldier has to be fed and clothed, he has to be paid money, he has to be treated and entertained, barracks have to be built for him, and most importantly, he has to be armed. Behind every thousand soldiers there are many thousands of weapons makers, scientists, designers, technologists, metallurgists and metal workers, miners, transportation and communication workers, ploughmen and cattle breeders. Many millions of people outside the army work for an army of millions. All of them are excluded from the process of creation and work for destruction. But they all have to be fed and clothed, they have to be provided with transportation and housing, they have to be paid wages and pensions.

Hence, with a million soldiers in the army, we are putting many millions of soldiers on the neck of society.

ounces of eaters who work for the needs of the war.

The most favorable option for entering a war is to strike a sudden crushing blow. But the power of a peacetime army is not enough to strike a strong enemy, even if its strength is almost one and a half million soldiers and officers. The strike may be sudden, but not crushing. If we mobilize before the war and increase the size of the army, we will frighten the enemy. The blow will be powerful, but the moment of surprise will be lost. And if in peacetime we constantly maintain an army of four or five million, we will ruin the state and "defeat ourselves".

Before the outbreak of the First World War, generals of all armies puzzled over how to combine all this: to have a large army, not to ruin the state, and not to scare the enemy.

In the end, no one managed to combine everything together. The main European states entered the war following roughly the same pattern:

1. The government declared mobilization and a state of war.
2. The peacetime army was deployed on the borders and covered mobilization with its presence. (Sometimes mobilization was covered by offensive operations with limited objectives or cavalry raids on close enemy rear areas).
3. After the general mobilization was announced, the armies swelled, their numbers increased several times, and in two or three weeks the main forces of the mobilized armies entered the first border battles.

This is also how the Russian Army entered the First World War. Three weeks after the general mobilization was announced, its strength reached 5,338,000 soldiers and officers. But the moment of surprise was lost. As the war progressed, more and more millions were drafted under the banners, and the size of the army gradually grew.

In Germany, Austria-Hungary, Britain and France, the mobilization process differed in detail, but in principle none of the countries succeeded in delivering a sudden crushing blow to their enemies: mobilization consumed precious weeks of the initial period of the war, and with them surprise.

Now let us imagine ourselves in the humming corridors of the Red Army headquarters somewhere in 1925. The strategists are faced with the task of preparing a new world war in order to, as Comrade Frunze put it, "complete the tasks of the world revolution". The task of the strategists is not easy: to take into account the mistakes of all armies in the initial period of the First World War and to prepare a new war so that the state would not be ruined, the enemy would not be frightened and the army would be deployed in such a way that its blow would be both sudden and crushing.

And a fundamentally new plan for entering the war was developed. Here is a summary of its contents.

1. The mobilization process is divided into two phases: covert and overt.
2. The first secret stage is before the outbreak of war. At this stage, the state apparatus, punitive bodies, industry, government, state and military communication systems, transportation, and the army was increased to 5 million soldiers.
3. For the sake of camouflage, the first secret mobilization phase should be extended for two years, and the secret mobilization should be masked by local conflicts: the local conflicts should be presented as the main and only reason for the country's switch to wartime.
4. The stage of secret mobilization should be completed with a sudden crushing blow against the enemy and at the same time begin the second open stage of mobilization, during which, in a few days, another 6 million should be conscripted into the Red Army to make up for losses and to complete the staffing of new divisions, corps and armies, which should be brought into the war as soon as they were ready. Then, in the course of the war, to draft more and more millions into the army.

5. The mobilization of the Second, Third and subsequent strategic echelons should be covered not by passive standing on the borders, but by crushing strikes of the First strategic echelon and a decisive invasion of the enemy's territory.

In this scheme, everything is clear and simple.

Except for one thing. How do you start secret mobilization two years before entry into

war if the moment of entry into the coming war is not known to us?

Soviet strategists also found the answer to this question: it is necessary not to follow events, not to wait for the war to arise spontaneously, by itself, at a moment unknown to us, but to plan it, to SET the moment of its beginning.

If we know when the war will start and the enemy does not know, we can carry out mobilization not in the initial period of the war, but on the eve. Secretly. We can carry out the maximum possible number of mobilization measures in the pre-war period so that after the beginning of hostilities mobilization would not begin, but would be completed.

The main forge of command cadres of the Red Army is the Frunze Military Academy. It is interesting to recall the views of the man whose name it bears: "I believe that an attack always affects the enemy's psychology by the fact that it alone reveals the stronger will." "The side that holds the initiative, the side that has the moment of surprise at its disposal, will often frustrate the will of the opponent and thereby create more favorable conditions for itself." "The attack itself strengthens the attacking side and gives it a better chance of success." (M.V. Frunze. Selected Works. Vol. 2, pp. 47-49). This is a choice, at a quick glance, only on three pages of multi-pood works. Anyone can find baskets of similar statements not only by Frunze, but also by Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev. Bukhari. Voroshilov, Shaposhnikov... And if these writings spoke of defense, they spoke only of defense of a special kind - to suddenly crush the enemy on his own territory and thus to protect themselves and the cause of the world revolution.

Chapter 10 WHERE TO BUILD GUNPOWDER FACTORIES?

Total ammunition losses by the end of 1941 amounted to about 25,000 railcars.

Development of the Home Front of the Soviet Armed Forces, p. 119

Stalin's People's Commissariat of Ammunition worked at once and at full power. Here are the figures For 1939, 936 million rifle cartridges, 2240000 mortar rounds, 5 208 000 small caliber shells, 6034000 large caliber shells were produced. Let us not jump to conclusions and say that this is not enough: 1939 was a year of formation. All these shells and cartridges were produced at the old factories that existed before. The idea of the People's Commissariat of Ammunition was to create new facilities in a short period of time, which would not only supplement the existing ones, but would surpass them many times over.

The question of the location of the munitions industry is a question of the nature of future warfare.

If Stalin intends to wage a holy defensive war, if he intends to hold his frontiers, then in this case the new ammunition factories should be placed behind the Volga. There they will be completely safe - enemy tanks will not reach there, and airplanes will not fly.

If Stalin was not confident in his forces, if Stalin, as we are assured, was afraid of Hitler, if there were fears that the Red Army would not be able to hold the borders and would retreat, then in this case new factories of the People's Commissariat of Munitions should be built not beyond the Volga, but even further away - in the Urals: There are raw materials there, there is a sufficient industrial and energy base, and the factories will be absolutely safe there. Let the enemy seize vast territories, but our industrial base will remain intact - then Hitler will know what a wounded bear is.

But neither the first nor the second options were even theoretically discussed. There was no need. The Red Army was not going to withdraw, nor was it going to hold the frontiers of its country.

If Stalin's interests were limited to the defense of his territory, he could have simply not started World War II.

According to Stalin's plan, the Red Army was to march into a bleeding, war-weakened Europe. The Red Army would advance across the border, while the ammunition factories and all other factories: tank, artillery, gun factories would remain farther and farther in the rear. Let us imagine that it is necessary to supply the Red Army with a small amount of ammunition, for example, one hundred thousand tons or, say, two hundred thousand tons. How to transport them from the Urals to the rear?

across the border? A standard military echelon takes 900 tons. Let's imagine how many echelons, how many wagons, how many locomotives are needed. Let's estimate how many working days it will be necessary to waste for drivers and all the railroad people, how much coal to burn. Let's calculate how many guards are needed for many days.

Besides all that, the railroads are not the only ones delivering shells. The railroads will be jammed with troops, repair and sanitary trains, tank cars, etc., etc., etc. In short, if we are preparing an offensive, the transfer of hundreds of thousands of tons of ammunition and everything else must be done covertly, and covertness, among other techniques, is achieved by reducing transportation. The ideal situation is when the factories are located near the borders. In this case an echelon should be driven not for many days through the whole country, but for a few hours. In this case, the need for transportation is reduced: one echelon is turned around several times. This frees up the internal railroads for other military transportation.

And it was decided to build new shell factories not beyond the Volga and not in the Urals, but closer to the borders. As close as the metallurgical base allowed. And they were located: in Zaporozhie, Dnepropetrovsk, Dneprodzerzhinsk, Kharkov, Krivoy Rog, Leningrad.

Ammunition factories were producing more and more products, and the voracious People's Commissariat of Ammunition was devouring the state reserves of non-ferrous metals: lead, copper, nickel, chromium, tin, and mercury. The more non-ferrous metals were used for ammunition, the less they were left for all other industries. And the question arose: how long can this continue?

Another question: what to do with ammunition? At school, each of us solved problems of the following type: "a liquid is poured into a certain volume through one pipe, and at the same time it is poured out through another pipe". Such problems are also found in math textbooks of the past centuries. They are even in the famous textbook of Magnitsky, which was used to teach children in Catherine's time and earlier. Stalin, military leaders, politicians and economists were also schoolchildren and solved problems: "through one pipe it flows in, through another it flows out".

In 1939, the very same problem arose: the Red Army consumed a certain amount of ammunition for combat training, for "liberation" campaigns; in addition, ammunition was used for "international aid" to Spain, Mongolia, and China. If ammunition supply is equal to ammunition consumption, there is no problem, but if the supply is greater than the consumption, all the tanks will soon be full. The capacity of artillery depots is known, the consumption is known. By simple arithmetic it is easy to determine when the overflow will occur. What to do? Create new storage tanks? That's not so easy.

Imagine you have been given the task of building storage tanks for, for example, one million tons of shells. If the humidity in the warehouses and storages is slightly higher than the set humidity, corrosion will occur and the gunpowder will get damp. What will Comrade Stalin and his faithful disciple Comrade Beria do to you in this case? A little higher temperature, a little drier air, a spark from a soldier's horseshoe and... You can't locate warehouses together, you can't locate them near cities and factories, you need them far away, and there are no roads there. In a word, storage facilities are not the solution to the problem. And no matter how many of them are built, they will overflow if more is poured in than is poured out. And more and more was poured in: in addition to the enterprises of the People's Commissariat of Ammunition, 235 factories of other Commissars were involved in the production of arrow elements. (History of the Second World War, M., vol.2, p.190). In addition to all this and independently from the People's Commissariat of Ammunition (it was already huge), in January 1941 the Main Directorate for the construction of gunpowder, cartridge, cartridge case and shell factories - Glavboepripasstroy - was established. This monster united 23 construction trusts under its control. Note: it was not focused on the construction of storage facilities, but on the construction of new enterprises.

Glavboepripasstroy was building new facilities at a rapid pace and handing them over to the People's Commissariat of Munitions. And we had to think about marketing the products.

In April 1941, the Red Army's Main Artillery Directorate issued an order: the products of the People's Commissariat of Ammunition were to be transported to the western state borders and laid out on the ground.

Ask the front-line soldiers what that means.

The Kremlin-Lubyanka historians are forced to admit that Stalin was preparing aggression, Stalin was preparing the enslavement of Europe. But, they say, Stalin could commit aggression only in

1942. Let us ask these historians whether it is possible to leave in the open air for autumn rains, for snowy winter and for spring mud a certain amount of ammunition, say, five hundred thousand tons? You can't do that. It's clear to us. So was Stalin more stupid than us?

Putting ammunition on the ground in 1941 meant the decision to start the war in 1941. And no other interpretation of this veil can be thought of.

And shells were also kept near the borders in railroad cars. This was a very expensive method of storage and very unreliable: how could the temperature and humidity in a freight car be maintained? If the Soviet generals were planning to hold the borders, they should have unloaded the railroad cars and dispersed the supplies among the troops. If they planned to retreat, then they should have hitched up steam locomotives and pulled the ammunition trains away from the borders. And leave the bare minimum on the borders. But if the Communists planned to move forward, then they should have kept the shells in the wagons, and had 170,000 railroad soldiers and the appropriate equipment to re-stitch the Western European gauge to the broad Soviet standard at the borders. The artillery was used correctly, i.e. secretly concentrated en masse in narrow breakthrough areas and carried out sudden fire preparation. In the Stalingrad operation the Don Front under the command of Lieutenant-General K.K. Rokossovsky broke through the defense in a narrow area - only 12 kilometers. Here, in addition to tanks, the defense was broken by 24 rifle regiments, supported by 36 artillery regiments. Rokossovsky concentrated 135 guns on each kilometer, and on the direction of the main blow the density was 167 guns per kilometer.

During the war, the concentration of artillery, tanks, infantry, and aircraft increased steadily. By the end of the war, Soviet headquarters began to use kilotons as a unit of measurement when calculating the power of an artillery strike. Soviet artillery spoke the language of the nuclear age.

In the Viedre-Oder operation the Soviet command used 34,500 guns and mines. They were not distributed evenly along the front, but concentrated in the breakthrough areas. In the strip of the 3rd Guards Army, for example, a density of 420 guns per kilometer was achieved. The duration of the artillery preparation was constantly reduced, but the power increased. In the same operation; in the 5th Shock Army strip, the duration of the artillery preparation was planned at 55 minutes. It started well, but was stopped after 25 minutes. In 25 minutes 23 thousand tons of ammunition were used up. On each kilometer of the breakthrough front, 23,000 tons of ammunition were expended.

15,200 shells of medium and large caliber. The penalty battalions went into the breakthrough without encountering any resistance. Their actions convinced the command: there was no need to continue artillery preparation - no one was resisting. Savings: 30 minutes of time (which is very important in war) and 30,000 tons of shells.

Even more artillery was used in the Berlin operation - more than 42,000 guns and mortars. Marshals G.K. Zhukov and I.S. Konev concentrated not only a monstrous amount of artillery but also a monstrous amount of ammunition in the breakthrough areas. Konev broke through the front at a stretch of 36 kilometers, where he concentrated 8,626 guns and mortars. Zhukov concentrated fewer guns - 7,318, but broke through the front at a stretch of 30 kilometers, so artillery densities he had higher. In the same strips were concentrated the main forces of tank and air armies and a corresponding number of infantry.

The record was set in the 381st Rifle Division of the 2nd Shock Army during the Vostochno-Prussian operation: 468 guns and mortars per one kilometer of front, not counting "Ka-tush" - multiple rocket launchers.

During the war, the Red Army expended 427 million shells and artillery mines and 17 billion rounds of ammunition. Math buffs, divide this by the number of German soldiers and determine how many were killed per soldier. Add to that hand grenades, land mines, aerial bombs. Who could resist this power?

And here it should be recalled that in the war the Soviet Union used only 15 percent of the pre-war capacity of the People's Commissariat of Munitions. The rest was lost in the early part of the war. In a surprise attack, Hitler destroyed not only the Red Army's cadre divisions and air force, not only seized strategic supplies, but also the territories where the newest factories of the People's Commissariat of Munitions were located. During the retreat, the Red Army destroyed

their own factories or simply abandoned them. Some things were taken out, but try to move one blast furnace a thousand kilometers away. Try hauling even one thousand tons of shells from a border forest to a railway station, loading them into wagons and hauling them out under fire.

The Red Army lost not only 500,000 tons of shells in the initial period of the war, but also the industry that could produce new shells.

The Red Army lost 25,000 railroad cars of artillery shells in the border areas. Why were the shells stored in railroad cars? Where were they going to be taken? If the defense was being prepared, the shells should have been given to the troops. If they were preparing a retreat, there was no reason to concentrate the shells in the border areas.

From August to November 1941, German troops captured 303 Soviet gunpowder, steam and shell factories, which had an annual output of 101 million shell casings, 32 million artillery mine casings, 24 million aerial bomb casings, 61 million shell casings, 30 million hand grenades, 93,600 tons of gunpowder, 3,600 tons of TNT. This amounted to 85 percent of the total capacity of the People's Commissariat of Ammunition. (N.A. Voznesensky. Military economy of the USSR during the Patriotic War. M., 1947, p. 42). On top of that, the shell factories concentrated mobilization stocks of valuable raw materials: chintz, brass, alloy steel. All this was taken over by Germany and used against the Red Army.

But Stalin's pre-war potential was so enormous. that he was able to build during the war a new munitions industry beyond the Volga, in the Urals, in Siberia, and to produce all the things that fell later on the German army.

Hitler dealt Stalin a surprise blow, and Stalin fought back, relying on 15 percent of the capacity of the People's Commissariat of Munitions. The results of the war are known. Let's try to imagine what could have happened if Hitler had delayed the strike and himself fell under the crushing Stalinist blow. In this case, Stalin would have used in the war not 15 percent of the capacity of the People's Commissariat of Munitions, and all 100. What would have been the outcome of World War II?

In 1942, the Red Army secretly prepared and conducted a counteroffensive at Stalin-Grad. It is said that it was from this time that the Soviet Union became a superpower. But only those who do not know the true scope of Stalin's preparations for war can say that. Yes, Stalingrad was a famous operation, involving masses of infantry, aviation, artillery and tanks. It was carried out by true masters of strategy. But Stalingrad pales in comparison with what was being prepared in 1941.

Stalingrad is mostly reservists. This is improvisation. And in 1941, the Red Army was preparing for an offensive, and millions of reservists.

The counter-offensive at Stalingrad was 1,500 tanks. In 1941, there were ten times as many in the first echelon alone. And the quality? In 1941, the Soviet troops had more T-34 and KV tanks than they had at Stalingrad.

Stalingrad was a surprise attack by two flank groups. And in 1941 the same thing was being prepared, but the flank groups were immeasurably more powerful and threateningly close to Berlin. Stalingrad was Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Vasilevsky, Malinovsky, Vatutin. In 1941, these same generals were preparing what they later accomplished at Stalingrad.

In my opinion, the Soviet Union was a superpower in 1941. In the summer of 1941, Hitler crushed this superpower with a sudden blow. Everything that Stalin used later in the war at Stalingrad and Kursk, at Moscow and Berlin were only fragments and remnants of the original Soviet power.

Chapter 11 THE CRYING CHINGISKHAN

*Logic suggested that we should not wait for the enemy to use all the air force, but should seize the initiative in the air and be the first to deliver massive strikes on his air force.
to the airfields.*

Chief Air Marshal A. Novikov, VIZh, 1969 N 1, p.62

The name of the airplane "Ivanov" had another meaning "Stalin formulated the task as follows: the airplane should be very simple to manufacture, so that it was possible to make as many copies of it, as many people in our country with the surname Ivanov". (L.M. Kuzmina. General Designer Pavel Sukhoi. Moscow, "Molodaya Gvardiya", 1983, p. 57).

The thirties were the golden era of Soviet aviation records. Let us remember how much effort and money was spent to set them. Pilots who broke world records were national heroes. Stalin knew a lot about altitude, speed, range, payload (bomb load). At the height of the record-breaking aviation psychosis, Stalin set the task to build the Ivanov, the main airplane for the coming war. But the amazing thing is that Stalin did not demand record speed, record altitude, record range, or even an unprecedented bomb load from the creators of the Ivanov. Stalin does not require outstanding performance Stalin only requires simplicity and reliability Stalin's vision: to create an airplane that can be produced in quantities exceeding all combat aircraft of all types in all countries of the world combined. The main series of Ivanovs was planned to be 100,000-150,000 airplanes.

Here we come to the main point.

Stalin plans to produce an airplane in the largest series in human history. But it's not a fighter plane. It's not a plane for defensive warfare. This is an aggressor airplane.

The question arises: if we produce 100,000-150,000 light bombers, will we not pe- repugn all our neighbors? Let's not ask such questions. Let us not consider ourselves smarter than Stalin. Let us pay tribute to Stalin's cunning.

Stalin did not intend to start mass production of Ivanovs in peacetime. The mobilization was divided into two periods: covert and overt. During the covert mobilization, it was planned to produce a small (in Soviet terms) series - only a few hundred of these aircraft. The purpose of this series was to master production, gain experience, fly the planes around, and test them in small conflicts. These first few hundred can be used in the first strike, especially in secondary directions or following airplanes with higher characteristics And after our strike, mass production of Ivanovs will begin in the tens of thousands.

"Ivanov" is like an invisible mobilization reserve. It's like the PPSH rifle. Shpagin's automatic rifle, the PPSH, was created before the war, tested and approved. The war broke out, and immediately every crib workshop, every hardware store, every small factory began to produce the simplest, most reliable, very powerful weapon in quantities incomprehensible.

An airplane with relatively poor performance can be a terrible weapon. Let's look at Hitler. He too had his own winged jackal, the Ju-87. It was a single-engine plane, more like a fighter than a bomber. The crew was two people Defensive armament was weak - one machine gun to protect the rear hemisphere. Bomb load was less than a ton. The U-87 was older than the Nikajima B-5N and Ivanov, so its flight characteristics were lower. It belonged to the generation of airplanes that did not retract their landing gear in flight. BUT!

But groups of dozens of Ju-87s would make a surprise strike on "sleeping" airfields and by this strike they cleared the sky for themselves. After the first strike on the airfields they flew over the enemy territory completely calmly and did not need record speed - who to evade in the air, who to chase? The 10-87s dominated the skies of Poland, Norway. France. But in Britain they met with a rebuff. It was impossible to suppress British airfields by a surprise strike - there were no conditions for a surprise strike. After taking part in several raids, the losses of U-87s were so great that the order was given not to use them over the British Isles.

In the spring of 1941, Yugoslavia and Greece. The U-87s make a surprise strike, and once again they are successful and beloved. In May, British troops strike Crete, but the strike was a surprise, and the U-87 is once again a symbol of "britzkrieg", success and victory. In June, a surprise attack on Soviet airfields. On a beautiful sunny morning, the German air force had a clear sky and could use any type of aircraft - there was nothing to fear.

Soviet generals admit that they regarded the U-87 as obsolete, and it brought them incalculable disasters. The dominance of the U-87 lasted until Soviet aviation did not

gained strength. In the second period of the war U-87 on the Soviet-German front were used less and less often, until they disappeared altogether "In the course of the Eastern Campaign, the loss of air superiority soon called into question the expediency of using relatively small and clumsy dive bombers U-87" (E Middeldorf. Tactics in the Russian Campaign P 225) "Ivanov" was created later than the U-87 Therefore, the characteristics of the "Ivanov" were higher, and structurally the two aircraft differed greatly. But in spirit and concept, in methods of application and in the role assigned to the U-87 and Ivanov, they were twins. And the B-5N Ivanov is a sibling of the Ni-Kajima B-5N not only in concept and spirit, but also in its main characteristics. An airplane with a relatively low speed can be dangerous because a long sword is needed for a fair fight, while a short knife is enough to kill a sleeping person without a long sword. Sudden strike airplanes did not need record-breaking performance. Stalin's logic is simple and clear: if by a surprise strike we cover the enemy airfields and thereby clear the sky of his planes, then we need a simple and mass aircraft with powerful armament; its main purpose is to support our advancing tank avalanches and airborne paratroopers, air terror over defenseless territories. This was the kind of airplane Stalin ordered his designers to design.

Since the advent of aviation, its role in warfare in general, and in particular in ground operations, has grown steadily. At the end of the century, during the Persian Gulf War, aviation carried out 80 percent of firing missions. Joseph Stalin clearly recognized this trend in the thirties.

The aircraft designer Pavel Osipovich Sukhoi fulfilled Stalin's requirements to the maximum extent. He was the winner of the competition. In August 1938, Sukhoi's Ivanov under the brand name BB-1 (short-range bomber one) was put into production at two plants at once. Then it began to be produced at a third plant: a gigantic fourth plant was under construction, and in addition, plants producing other types of aircraft were ready to switch to Ivanov production on order. In September 1939, Sukhoi's group, as a sign of encouragement, was separated into an independent design bureau. In 1940, after the introduction of a new indexing system, Sukhoi's Ivanov was named Su-2 in honor of its creator. It was the first serial airplane of one of the greatest aviation designers of the 20th century. Until June 22, 13 aviation regiments, each with 64 planes, were fully equipped with Su-2 aircraft.

The Su-2, like the Ivanovs of other designers, was multi-purpose: light bomber, tactical reconnaissance and attack aircraft. The design was extremely simple and rational. The Su-2 was more suitable for mass production than any other airplane in the world. It carried 400-600 kg of bombs, 5 SHKAS machine guns with a record high rate of fire for those times and up to ten rockets of 82 mm or 132 mm caliber. The speed was 375 km/h at ground level, 460 at altitude. The control of the Su-2 was double - for both the pilot and the gunner sitting behind him. Therefore, there was no need to produce a training version of the airplane: each combat Su-2 could be a training airplane, and each training airplane could be a combat airplane. This simplified mass training of pilots. The Su-2 was available to a pilot of any qualification: a civilian pilot from the GVF and a girl from an aeroclub. Pilots were not required to master aerobatics, nor to be able to fly at night, nor to be able to navigate well on the ground and in space. They had an easy job: take off at dawn, join a powerful group, fly in a straight line, approach the target.

The question of cover fighters arises. A bomber in combat, especially a short-range bomber operating over the battlefield and in the enemy's immediate rear, must be covered by fighters. If an appropriate number of fighters had been ordered together with the Su-2, the Su-2 could have been used in any situation, for example, for counter-attacks against an aggressor attacking the Soviet Union. But fighters in such quantities were not ordered, so there was only one possibility to use the Su-2 in the war - to attack the enemy first and neutralize his aircraft. Without this, it was impossible to use the defenseless Su-2. That is why the decision to produce at least 100,000 Su-2 light bombers was tantamount to a decision to BEGIN THE WAR WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY ATTACK ON THE ENEMY'S AIRROADS.

By the beginning of 1941, Stalin had prepared everything necessary for a surprise strike, for suppressing German aircraft on airfields. Stalin had overwhelming quantitative and qualitative superiority for such actions.

Stalin had a unique armored IL-2 attack aircraft. We are not talking about armor plates added to the airframe, but about a purely armored hull. It was the only armored aircraft in history, a real flying tank. In addition to armor protection, unique survivability and excellent flight characteristics, the IL-2 had a super-powerful armament: automatic guns, bombs, RS-82 and RS-132 rockets.

The Communists agree that the IL-2 was great, but claim there were only 249 of them. That is indeed true. But Hitler didn't have a single airplane like it. And there was nothing like it in the entire world. Stalin has "only" 249 IL-2s, but the Soviet industry is ready to produce them in ANY quantity. Even after losing most of the aircraft and engine factories in the second half of 1941, the IL-2 was still produced in the largest series. It did not become obsolete until the end of the war and went down in history as the most massive combat airplane of all times.

Stalin had the Pe-2 dive bomber to hit airfields. Hitler had good airplanes, but the Pe-2 was superior to any of them in basic characteristics. For example, the Pe-2's speed was 30 kilometers per hour faster than the best German bomber, the Ju-88, and 100 kilometers per hour faster than the He-111. Again, communist propaganda declares that Stalin had only 460 Pe-2 dive bombers. This is correct, and it is indeed very few. But it is still more than all the Ju-88s on the Soviet-German front on June 22, 1941

For strikes on airfields, Hitler had the U-87, the symbol of "blitzkrieg". The Soviet analog was the Su-2. It was created later and therefore was superior to the U-87 in all characteristics, first of all, in speed and firepower, in addition, it had armor protection, although not as good as the IL-2. Hitler had 290 U-87s on the Eastern Front on June 22, while Stalin had 249 IL-2s and over 800 Su-2s. In addition, Soviet fighters of all types, from the I-15 to the Mig-3, were armed with rocket-propelled grenades for the first strike against "sleeping" airfields. For the first strike, the planes that the Communists called obsolete were also suitable. For example, the I-16 fighter was two to three times more powerful in firepower than any enemy fighter and was armored. It had excellent maneuverability, and record speed was not necessary when striking airfields. The number of I-16s alone on Soviet western border airfields is greater than the number of German airplanes of all types combined.

Immediately after the first strike, the Soviet aircraft industry must begin mass production of Su-2s. Stalin intended to literally build as many light bombers as there were small but agile horsemen in the Chin Giskhan hordes.

By the beginning of 1941, Soviet designers had created a whole constellation of remarkable aircraft, but Stalin loves the Su-2.

In 1940 and the first half of 1941, there was an imperceptible but intensive preparatory work for mass production. At the aircraft factories that are preparing to produce the Su-2, workers are supplied by military commissions, like soldiers to the front. (L. Kuzmina, p. 66). And the first thirteen regiments are mastering the airplane. Pilots are supplied by civil aviation and flying clubs. Lieutenant-General of Aviation Anatoly Pushkin (at that time a major, commander of the 52nd Aviation Regiment): "The Su-2 was good because it did not need airfields. It could take off and land on any flat field.

Air Marshal Ivan Pstygo: "In the fall of 1940, our 211th short-range bomber aviation regiment armed with Su-2 a i r c r a f t was being formed in Bessarabia near Kotovsky... The aircraft made a strong impression.

A bomber, and the look like a fighter - small, compact, beautiful" In this passage, attention should be paid to the time and place of formation of the regiment: it is against Romania. It is our winged jackal preparing to claw at the throat of the weaker.

Here is another regiment in the same area. Says twice Hero of the Soviet Union Colonel G F Sivkov: "By the end of December 1940, the formation of the 210th short-range bomber regiment was completed" The colonel explains where the flying staff was taken from. "The pilots came from the civil air fleet" (Readiness number one. p. 42). The secret mobilization also took over the civil aviation.

The fate of the Su-2 is sad. Yu-87 and "Nikajima" B-5N had the opportunity to prove themselves in surprise strikes and become famous. But "Ivanov" was not allowed by Hitler to work on the direct purpose. Hitler launched a preemptive strike on Soviet airfields and the Su-2 found itself without the work for which it had been created. Production of the Su-2 was quickly curtailed. It was not needed in a defensive war. The factories that were preparing mass production of Su-2s (e.g. Kharkov Aviation Plant) fell into enemy hands. Previously produced Su-2s suffered heavy losses: there were no fighters to cover them.

Hero of the Soviet Union M. Lashin: "I flew the Su-2... a light aircraft... flying, maneuverable, incredibly survivable and trouble-free. The Su-2 burned long and hard. It never burst into flames."

Hero of the Soviet Union V.I. Strelchenko: "The Su-2 did not burn even if the gas tank was damaged - carbon dioxide shielding helped".

Aircraft designer V.B. Shavrov wrote the most complete and, in my opinion, objective history of the development of Soviet aviation. All other aircraft designers were his rivals, so Shavrov was not stingy in his criticism. But he did not scold the creators of the Su-2; "Although everything possible was taken from the Su-2, and its authors had nothing to reproach, the airplane met the actual requirements only before the war" (History of Aircraft Designs in the USSR. 1938-1950. p. 50). In other words, everything was fine, the creators of the aircraft could not be blamed, the Su-2 met the requirements until June 21, 1941, but at dawn on June 22 it ceased to meet the requirements.

"The Ivanov had its share of trouble from both outsiders and insiders. Before the war, the Su-2 was kept secret and was not planned to be used with their fighters. At the beginning of the war, Soviet fighters mistook the unfamiliar silhouette of the Ivanov for an enemy aircraft. Pokryshkin shot down 59 enemy planes. Officially. In fact, there were exactly 60 of them. The first was the Su-2. Ironically, after the war Pokryshkin studied at the Academy in the same group with the Su-2 pilot he shot down. It was Ivan Petygo, also a future Marshal of Aviation.

The Su-2 had to be misused. Here is an example: in July 1941, 50 Su-2s hit the bridge over the Dnieper near Rogachev... If we were preparing for a defensive war, blowing up the bridge during retreat would be a minute matter for two sappers. But we were not preparing for a defensive war, so instead of two sappers Su-2s had to do the work that was not theirs. A whole aviation regiment. But in conditions of enemy domination in the air, a regiment of short-range bombers must be covered by at least one regiment of fighters. And there are none. What is 50 Su-2s going in a dense group without cover? And the bridge was not blown up, and the regiment was lost. And there was an order: do not fly Su-2 in dense groups, although it was designed and created only for flights in dense groups.

In a defensive war, a fighter was needed. The Su-2 was tried as a fighter. But it was not a fighter, it only looked like a fighter. The pilots showed suicidal heroism, but no one had taught them how to conduct aerial combat, especially on an aircraft that was not designed for aerial combat.

The first and only woman in the history of world aviation who made an air ram was Ekaterina Zelenko from the 135th close air bomber regiment. It happened on September 12, 1941. With her Su-2 she rammed an MS-109 in the air, shot it down, and while trying to land her plane was shot down by another Me-109. Civil aviation pilots, young sportsmen, girls from sports clubs did wonders of bravery, but the Su-2 stubbornly did not fit into the "Great Patriotic" war, because it was created for another war.

Hitler thwarted the attack, but he had no idea of Stalin's real strength, how serious his intentions were, how well prepared he was for offensive warfare. The Su-2 did not prove itself in the war, but in any other circumstances it would have been a formidable opponent. There are enough indications that the Soviet industry was fully prepared to mass-produce Ivanovs. For example, in a defensive war, fighters were needed first and foremost. Aircraft designer S. A. Lavochkin urgently needed a powerful reliable engine to modernize the LaGG-Z fighter, and in huge quantities. No problem, the industry is ready to produce in any quantity the M-82 engine, which was intended for the Su-2. The industry is not only ready to produce them, but also has thousands of these engines in stock.

Lavochkin put it on the airplane, and the La-5 fighter, a famous and beloved by pilots, was created.

The Soviet industry was ready to mass-produce ShKAS machine guns for many types of aircraft, but primarily for the Su-2. The Su-2 was not produced, but the readiness of the industry was not in vain - there were no problems with aircraft armament. The Soviet industry was ready for mass production of bombs for the Su-2, and it produced them. But only for the Il-2 and other airplanes. The Soviet industry was ready for mass production of 82-mm and 132-mm rockets. And it produced them. They were used not only in aviation, but also in ground artillery.

The statistics is as follows: on July 1, 1941, the Red Army had 7 BM-13 multiple rocket launchers. A month later, there were 17 of them. Some were killed in battle, others were produced, and on September 1, they became 49. At the same time, the Red Army began production of another type - BM-8. On October 1, 1941 the Red Army, despite the losses, had 406 BM-8 and BM-13. Further growth was equally rapid, and soon these weapons became mass-produced. Generalfeldmarschall Kesselring testifies:

"The terrible mental impact of the 'Stalinist organs' is a highly unpleasant memory for any German soldier who was on the Eastern Front". (Gedanken zum Zweiten Weltkrieg. Bonn, 1955, S. 78) In the conditions of withdrawal and loss of industrial and raw material base, it was possible to quickly saturate the army with a fundamentally new system of armament, which was not available in any army in the world, and nothing equal to it had not appeared until the end of the war. An economic miracle, the Communists say. But there was no miracle.

It is just that during the period of secret mobilization, Soviet industry was prepared to produce rockets for the Ivanov. This weapon would have been much more effective on the Ivanov, for the artillerymen must first obtain information about the target, while the pilots are capable of finding the targets themselves. The artillerymen throw their shells a few kilometers without seeing the target, while the pilots fly hundreds of kilometers, they see the target and see the results of their work; the next wave of planes always has the opportunity to finish the job. The Ivanov was discontinued, but the industry produced shells in millions of batches. They were simply adapted for firing from ground installations.

The question as to whether the Soviet industry would have been able to produce 100-150 thousand Su-2s should be answered in the affirmative. Such production was planned for conditions when we strike first and our industry is not interfered with. Hitler thwarted Stalin's plan. But even after the loss of ALL aluminum, most aircraft and engine factories, the Soviet Union produced 41,989 aircraft during the war - the IL-2 and IL-10, which were incommensurably more difficult to manufacture. In addition, tens of thousands of aircraft of other types more complex than the Ivanov were produced.

If Stalin had struck Romania and thereby paralyzed the German army and industry, the entire Soviet industry could have worked without interference and built several times as many planes as it had built in the most unfavorable situation.

And another question: where to recruit such a lot of pilots? Stalin trained pilots in the istry. True, they were pilots who had been trained to fly in the clear skies. So many pilots were trained that in 1942, with rifles in their hands, thousands of them were thrown near Stalingrad to reinforce the infantry. ("Krasnaya Zvezda", December 15, 1992). Pilots of such qualification were not needed in the defensive war, just as the "Ivanov" airplane, for which they were trained, was not required. We will talk about it ahead...

And the idea of a winged Genghis Khan did not die. Soviet designers did not want to give it up. In 1943, the designer Dmitry Tomashevich produced the Pegasus attack aircraft, which had been started long ago, but because of the German attack and evacuation, was completed late - two engines, 140 horsepower each. Ground speed 172 kilometers per hour. At altitude, even less. One pilot. The plane had no gunner or defensive armament. The plane was built of non-aviation materials: construction plywood, pine beams, roofing iron, tank armor steel. The contours of the airplane formed only straight lines. Simplicity and cheapness - in the very last limit. Any furniture factory could build an airplane. And mass-produced. In bulk.

The Pegasus carried two 23-mm automatic cannons, a large-caliber machine gun and a 500 kg bomb. The pilot was covered with armor that protected him from the bullets of large-caliber machine guns.

and even from 20-mm shells. Gas tanks and other vital components were covered with armor. Gas tanks could be jettisoned if necessary. Firepower and reliable protection against ground fire made this truly cheapest and simplest of all aircraft a formidable opponent.

A test pilot, Major General of Aviation, Pyotr Stefanovsky has flown three hundred and sixteen types of aircraft. Among them were different variants of the Ivano-Va, there was also the Pegasus. Stefanovsky flew mostly airplanes, which at the moment of the first flight seemed to be on the verge of fantasy. "The Pegasus is not fantastic, but Stefanovsky gives

"Pegasus" high praise. According to him, it could have been an airplane produced in "colossal series". But! Not in a defensive war. "Ivanovs and Pegasuses could prowl the skies of Europe, Africa, India, but only on condition of a surprise attack on Germany and destruction of its air power or neutralization of oil fields in Romania. In any other situation, the Ivanovs and Pegasuses proved unnecessary. Their time never came. In March 1939, at the XVIII Party Congress, Stalin said: "The frenzied aviation arms race of the capitalist countries has been going on for a number of years and undoubtedly represents one of the most characteristic and defining moments of the inevitable general military clash. Stalin was right: a truly frenzied aviation arms race continued in the West. Military aviation in some of the largest Western countries reached a thousand combat aircraft and passed over this threshold. And Germany pulled far ahead. The number of German combat aviation reached 3600 combat aircraft. It was clear to Stalin in March 1939 that such a number of combat aircraft indicates the inevitability of war. And so it happened. In the same year, 1939, Hitler began his struggle for world domination.

If we define 3600 combat airplanes by the term "frenzied race of aviation armaments", what should we call the main series of "Ivanov"? If Hitler's 3600 warplanes are sufficient evidence of the "inevitability of a general military confrontation", what is the evidence of the preparation for production of one hundred thousand warplanes of only one type?

Chapter 12 INQUIBATOR

Central Russia is the hotbed of world revolution.

I.Stalin, "Pravda", November 10, 1920.

On January 25, 1931, the IX Komsomol Congress threw a winged slogan to the masses: "Komsomolets - on the plane!" Let us not think that someone hinted or prompted the Komsomol Congress. Not at all. The representatives of the young tribe themselves decided to learn to fly gliders and airplanes. Those were glorious times, in the country was rampant famine, organized by Comrade Stalin and other comrades, in a country capable of feeding itself and half the world, flourished cannibalism and corpse-eating. In those difficult but heroic times, funds were found to open dozens of new flying clubs with hundreds of training airplanes, funds were found for instructors and mechanics, currency reserves were found for parachute silk and fancy devices.

And the work boiled over. Enthusiastic Komsomol members in their spare time in clubs and sections of the voluntary Osoaviakhim society mastered aviation (and not only aviation) professions. Pilot training began on gliders; those who had mastered the glider were transferred to an airplane, and the best of those who had graduated from flying clubs, on the recommendation of the Komsomol, went to the Air Force's training facilities with both theoretical knowledge and flying experience.

But there were not enough pilots. Osoaviakhim was increasing production rates, and the Komsomol was sending more and more thousands of young enthusiasts to aviation clubs. The country was struck by the aviation-planner psychosis, which ran parallel to the parachute psychosis, completing and intensifying it. On February 22, 1935, the newspaper "On Guard" published a report to Stalin: 138,416 people could fly gliders. The Communist Party and Comrade Stalin personally expressed their satisfaction with the achievements of Osoaviakhim, but they also expressed their wishes that it was not time to start mass training of glider pilots.

The hint was taken A year for preliminary work, and on March 31, 1936, the Central Committee of the Komsomol and the

Central Committee of Osoaviakhim adopt a resolution "On mass gliding sport". It is an amazing decree. Everyone can read it in the newspaper "On Guard" from April 16, 1936. The training of gliderists in our country became really mass. But a gliderist is only the initial material from which pilots are prepared. On December 9, 1936 "Komsomolskaya Pravda" publishes a call to train 150 thousand pilots and a corresponding number of technical personnel.

This is, of course, a coincidence, but purely Soviet: in 1936, Stalin gave a secret order to develop an airplane "Ivanov", which could be produced in series of 100-150 thousand, and in the same year, 1936, the young tribe decides to train 150 thousand pilots.

Osoaviakhim is growing and getting stronger. At the end of 1939 it had 4 instructor training schools, 12 aviation technical, 36 gliding clubs and 182 flying clubs.

I don't know how many airplanes there were in Osoaviakhim. But an aeroclub is first of all an aerodrome. I don't think there was one single airplane on the airfield. I don't think there were two. Why build an airfield for the sake of two airplanes? But even if there were only a couple of airplanes on the airfields of Osoaviakhim, even then there are quite a lot of airplanes. We can also calculate from the other side: how many training airplanes are required, say, to train a thousand pilots? And to train 150 thousand?

This is a good time to remember that the Soviet Union is a country of victorious socialism, private property has been abolished in the country, so there could be no private initiative. Everything in the country was nationalized, everything was subordinated to the state, and therefore only with the permission of the state could land be allocated for airfields. And airplanes were built only by state enterprises, and airplanes were distributed only by the state, like airplane gasoline, like human resources, like everything else. Someone in our state generously gave Osoaviakhim everything that this voracious child demanded. And Osoaviakhim gave out the production: 121 thousand pilots were trained by the beginning of 1941 (VIZH, 1984, N 6, p. 5).

So the plan didn't work out?

The plan was fulfilled. It's just that Osoaviakhim was not the only organization that trained pilots, and not even the main one. Besides Osoaviakhim, pilots were also trained by educational institutions of the Red Army, the Red Army and the GVF.

In those days, civil aviation was an organization of modest size. The GVF had the main task to serve the needs of the leadership, the NKVD, the People's Commissariat of Communications and some other institutions. There was no mass transportation of passengers and they were not expected in the foreseeable future. By the beginning of the war the whole GVF system had 3927 people of flying and lifting personnel (i.e. including flight attendants). However, this small but rich organization had a potential: it could train pilots, including military ones. And it did. On September 2, 1935, a government decision was made to select and admit cadets to GVF flight and technical schools under the same conditions as those established for Air Force schools. In other words, in case of necessity, everything trained for the GVF could be used in military aviation.

On November 5, 1940, a government decision was adopted, which essentially turned the GVF into an auxiliary organization of the Air Force: "The Main Directorate of the GVF was entrusted with the task of training thousands of pilots during 1941 to staff Air Force schools with them in the future. For this purpose, in February-April 1941, the Main Directorate of the GVF deployed dozens of training squadrons, which trained thousands of cadets. They received 1048 additional training airplanes". (Marshal of the Soviet Union S. K. Kurkotkin. The rear of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War". C. 43). Training squadrons in the GVF were created 47, each with 250 cadets. 1048 training airplanes, which were received in full - also impressive. And another thing: thousands of cadets is one graduation. And what was planned after the first graduation?

Comrade Stalin has a nice picture: 47 training squadrons train thousands of pilots for the Air Force, and if you look from the outside, it is a civilian air fleet. And all roads, all paths are open to our young men, choose what you like: if you want to go to a military flying school, go to a civilian flying school, and if you don't want to be a military pilot, go to a civilian flying school... You will become a military man anyway.

In short, by the efforts of various organizations, the task of preparing the required number of pilots was accomplished. "Thousands of Komsomol members volunteered and were recruited by special Komsomol recruitment programs.

The Komsomol set a task for young people: to fully develop mass aviation sports and train 150,000 pilot-athletes. The Komsomol set a task for the youth: to train 150 thousand pilot-athletes by fully developing mass aviation sports. Our young men and women were up to this task". (Hello, sky. C-5) Here it is time to ask questions: who needs 150 thousand pilots? And why? But pilot training was not the only activity of the Oso-Aviakhim and similar institutions: in addition to pilots there was mass training of navigators, aviation technicians, motorists, radio operators, meteorologists, specialists in many other fields - as we already know, one million parachutists were trained. True, with parachutists it is easier: there is an explanation why they were trained*. Two British authors B. Gregory and D. Batchelor published in 1978 the book "Ap- oorps AgGage 1918-1941" and explained very clearly that a million of Soviet parachutists was just a hobby, a national hobby, people jumped for their own pleasure. Very convincing.

But one could argue that if the Communist Party had given starving children a loaf of blackberry each, it would have been more fun and cheaper.

So, experts have explained the million parachutists, but why the Communists trained 150,000 pilots, no one has explained or tried to explain. It is clear that it was not for civil aviation. As we have already seen, the GVF institutions had little need for pilots, and the GVF capabilities were used not only (and not so much) to meet domestic needs, but also to produce thousands of pilots, so to speak, "for export", i.e. for the Red Army. It is also clear that the mass training of pilots cannot be explained by national hobbies and other communist inventions. And this is why it was possible to complete aeroclubs and flight schools only on the principle of voluntary choice or on an incalculable number of other principles. The innumerable multitude of other principles have in common that they are not voluntary. Let us read any enthusiastic report about the great achievements of our youth in those glorious times and we will definitely find out that besides the principle of voluntary choice, other principles were also used: Komsomol recruitment, mobilization, etc. Without going too far, let us read once again the quote from the book "Hello, Sky" on which our gaze slipped a moment ago: "Thousands of Komsomol members voluntarily and..."

So what kind of pleasure are we talking about if a Komsomol member is driven into an airplane with a whip or some other exotic method?

No matter how you look at it, but 150 thousand pilots were trained not for their pleasure and not for the development of civil aviation, but for the flight schools of the Air Force. In the end, in the Air Force, fate brought together those who sought romance in the sky with those who did not, those who wanted to become military pilots, those who wanted to become civilian pilots, and even those who wanted to stay away from it all. During the first two five-year plan (from 1927 to 1937), 50 thousand military pilots and navigators were trained in the USSR. (Major-General of Aviation V.S. Shumikhin. Soviet Military Aviation. P.177). This is a whole order of magnitude higher than in any other aviation power. It is clear that while some of them were being trained, others dropped out, but the replenishment sharply exceeded the loss. The training of military pilots was not carried out in equal portions every year, but on an increasing scale.

The training of 50,000 pilots in ten years was carried out by the Air Force flight schools, the number of which was also increasing, and by 1937 reached 12 (we are not counting the naval aviation flight schools at the moment). In addition to the flight schools, the Air Force had one Academy for training of top command personnel. As of January 1, 1940, the number of Air Force flight schools was as follows
18. On September 1, 1940 - 28, and the academy was divided into two independent academies.

Three months later - the number of flight schools and colleges reached 41.

So maybe they were small flight schools? Air Marshal S. Krasovsky was a major-general of aviation and commanded one of such schools: 2000 cadets. (Life in Aviation. P. III).

So maybe Krasovsky commanded some special school, exceptional? Again, no: at the end of December 1940, there were 6,053 training aircraft in the Air Force training schools. ShchGASA, fond 29, inventory 31, file 107, sheet 28). The average number of 147 training airplanes for each flight school is 147. By modern standards 120 airplanes is an air division. By the standards of that time, 120 airplanes is two aviation regiments, and 6,000 airplanes is a division.

is exactly one hundred training regiments. And if the count of training aircraft in each flight school is over a hundred, then the count of cadets is over a thousand. 6 thousand training airplanes - this is only in the training institutions of the Air Force. And the Navy had its own aviation and its own educational institutions with training airplanes. It is clear, we are not talking now about training airplanes in the combat units of the Air Force and Navy, in the GVF, Osoaviakhim, NKVD, etc.

Kremlin historians like to emphasize the wild shortage of training aircraft. There was indeed a shortage: they wanted more training and combat airplanes, and more, and more, and more. And if you count the number of Soviet training planes and compare it with the number of German planes, it turns out that the Soviet Union had more training planes than Germany had training, combat and transport planes combined.

So, the Soviet Union entered 1941 with 41 flight schools. Not enough for Stalin. But what to do? Until 1940, it was possible to increase the number of cadets in each flight school. This opportunity was exhausted: each flight school was so full of cadets that it was impossible to squeeze in any more. Air Marshal S. Krasovsky testifies: flight schools were working at full capacity, flights - day and night without weekends and holidays. Krasovsky is not alone in his testimony.

Two possibilities remained to increase the output of military pilots.

First: to create new flight schools. The second is to increase the number of graduates through the quality of training, by reducing the training time. It is one thing to keep a cadet in a school for three years, but it is another thing to keep him in a school for one year: at the same place of training we will train three pilots instead of one at the same cost. And if we shorten the period to six months, we can train six pilots instead of one!

Which path to take?

On December 7, 1940, the Chief of the Air Force, Lieutenant-General of Aviation Pavel Rychagov, at a meeting of the Main Military Council, proposed to use both possibilities simultaneously.

From January 1, 1941, to May 1, the number of air force flight schools was increased. As of May 1, the Air Force had three military academies, two higher navigator schools, command staff retraining courses, 16 technical and 88 flight schools and schools. In addition, on November 6, 1940, special schools of the Air Force were established in the system of the People's Commissariat of Education. This is the preparation of boys for enrollment in the Air Force flying schools. But we do not count this: it is not the army, but a purely civilian agency.

Having collected information about the number of air force flight schools and the number of cadets, I personally questioned it all. How can you believe any of this?! I think I'm not alone. Therefore, if my reader does not believe it either, I recommend a simple way of verification. During the war and pre-war conflicts more than 2400 Soviet pilots became heroes. For each of them it is easy to collect information about where and when they were trained. Start collecting and shelving them. You can quickly see that there were 50, 60, 70 flight schools.

The second way: former front-line soldiers are looking for their comrades-in-arms and classmates, for example, through the

"Red Star." It is a whole river of information. Collect and process this information (and not only about aviation). It is terribly fascinating if you get involved, if you do this work for years.

You can also collect biographies of famous aviation generals and marshals. There's a lot to learn there.

The number of military flying schools and the number of cadets in them is not well grasped by the imagination, but anyone who independently collects information about the scope of training of flight personnel for the Red Army will agree: there were many flying schools and schools, and they worked in the rhythm of Stakhanov.

But even believing these figures, it is not easy to dispel doubt: it is not clear how it is possible to build at least a dozen aviation schools in three months? A school is an airfield, hangars, workshops, warehouses and capital buildings. A school is a team of instructors, mechanics, repairmen and specialists of many other profiles. How can all this be staffed in such a short time?

There is no secret. For ten years, Stalin spared no expense in developing the Osoaviakhim flying clubs. The organization was voluntary (in the Soviet sense), but paramilitary, and the top leadership was purely military, headed by Major-General of Aviation Pavel Kobelev. It is easy to turn voluntary paramilitary clubs into not-so-voluntary flight schools of the Air Force, because it is the following

this transformation was contained in the original plan. For ten years everything had been prepared and tested for years: and the staff is in place (they are only sworn in and dressed), and the airfield is there, and hangars, and workshops, and airplanes. There are no capital buildings, but we will make do with barracks. We are trained to build barracks. Put the barracks in a row on the edge of the airfield - that's the flight school for you.

The third Air Force Academy was created according to the same methodology. However, capital buildings were erected for the academy. Colonel-General of Aviation A.N. Ponomarev tells the story. Before the war he was a major-general of aviation. Send him to Leningrad. There built a complex of the Institute of Engineers GVF. Comrade Stalin invested a lot of money in civil aviation: training buildings, laboratories, dormitories - up to date. The general was walking along the corridors. In a military academy, everyone would stand in line, but here they don't even notice him. (He writes so in his memoirs - in line.) Nothing. All in due time. The general meets his former professor.

"- Alexander Ponomarev! Look what he's become! A general! - He hugged me. - What fates? "

- Yeah, we're gonna work together.

- Here? But you're military, aren't you?

- Soon everyone in this house will be a military man." (Conquerors of the Sky. P.82).

This is how the third military academy appeared within the Air Force. This is how all flight schools were created: first we invest money in a "voluntary" flying club, and one fine morning we change the signboard.

But there were still not enough pilots. And then it was decided to cut the training period. The official story says: "by decision of the Party and the government". I understand it: the decision of Stalin and Molotov.

Previously, pilots and navigators were trained in military schools under a three-year program, not counting preliminary training in Osoaviakhim. It was decided to keep only four flight schools with a full term of training, but to reduce the full term to two years in peacetime and one year in wartime.

55 flight schools - to transform into flight schools with a short program: in peacetime - nine months, in wartime - six months.

29 flight schools - with an extremely short program: four months in peacetime, three in wartime.

The enrollee did not know all these wisdoms and had no right to choose. Everything depended on pure chance: where they would be sent. Obviously, there were orders: the best were sent to flying schools, the poorer ones to flying schools with a short program, and what was left - to schools with an extremely short program. But I can hardly believe that such orders were followed exactly, if there is no time at all for pilot training, then even less for preliminary selection and sorting.

Four flight schools trained pilots who could eventually become squadron and regiment commanders, 55 schools with a short program trained fighter wingmen who could eventually become lead pilots and bomber co-pilots who could eventually become first pilots. And in 29 schools with an extremely short program they trained fighter wingmen and co-pilots for bomber aviation, who could not turn into anyone in the long run. I looked at the training programs of all these schools and I have no doubts for me personally - falcons were trained for slaughter....

It seems that they decided to train the bulk of pilots in 55 schools with a short program. But this is psychology at work: 55 is more than 29. But it was 29 flight schools with extremely short programs that became the main forge of flight personnel. Let's do the math. To simplify the calculations, let's imagine that each flight school has one thousand students. In this case 55 flight schools with a short program will train 55 thousand pilots in 1941, graduate them and start training a new set of pilots. But 29 schools with a very short program in a year of peacetime are able to make three graduates of 29 thousand each. Three graduates - 87 thousand pilots. But the flight schools had not one thousand cadets, but one and a half thousand, or even two thousand. So the preponderance in favor of pilots trained in extremely short

program, was even more tangible.

And let us not be deceived by the words: three months in wartime and four months in peacetime. It's not a big difference! If the majority of pilots are trained in four months, it is no longer peacetime. There is one explanation for this fact - since December 7, 1940 Soviet aviation has been working in wartime mode. I recommend those who are curious to find information about the training of Japanese suicide pilots during the war. It is instructive to compare.

And let nine months of training in a short program not fool us. You can't train a full-fledged pilot in nine months. You can't. By the way, some of the flight schools that were supposed to train pilots under a nine-month program immediately switched to a six-month wartime program. The Kirovabad flight school is a vivid example of this. Even those few two-year schools should not deceive us. They announced: two years in peacetime, one year in wartime. In theory. But here is the practice: "All two-year aviation training schools were transformed into one-year". (V.S. Shumikhin. Soviet Military Aviation. P.233). It was possible to declare the peacetime program to be even a seven-year program: no one studied in the peacetime program anyway.

Now let's imagine that you and I have opened a farm for raising roosters and other animals. The capacity of our hatchery is, let's say, 150 thousand roosters per year (actually more). One year we produce, the second year, the third ... Let's not philosophize on the topic of a lot or a little, everything is relative, and think about a purely practical question: what to do with them then? Let's think about the realization of finished products, about sales. Or we will overstock. Or we'll get the real overproduction, which capitalists have. But we are not capitalists. Our farm is a planned one, and our sales are planned in advance.

Jokes aside: if on December 7, 1940 the aviation incubator was launched at full capacity, it means that Stalin decided to start the war in 1941. If Stalin does not start the war, then by the fall of 1941, there will be nowhere to put the pilots-unskilled pilots. It was once dreamed of 150 thousand pilots. And in 1940, such capacities were deployed that the YEARly output exceeded 150 thousand.

All communist historians are forced to admit that Stalin was preparing aggression, but, they say, for 1942. If so, they should have kept the assembly lines running and increased the training period for the inexperienced pilots. We'd have enough quantity anyway, and the quality would increase. But Stalin's timing was different - he needed graduates already in 1941. En masse.

Could it be, some historians timidly say, that Stalin was preparing to repel aggression? Maybe all these pilots were preparing for a defensive war, for the "Great Patriotic War," so to speak?

Let's pay attention to the dates. Hitler made the final decision to attack Stalin on December 18, 1940. But German industry had not switched to wartime mode, and pilots in Germany were being trained under quite normal programs. Stalin made the final decision to attack Germany earlier. The conversion of the aviation incubator to wartime mode on December 7, 1940 is proof of this.

And if by and large, the creation of Stalin's aviation incubator began ten years before 1941, back in 1931, when the slogan was thrown: "Komsomolets - on the airplane!" At that time, Hitler had not yet come to power in Germany, and may not come at all, and Stalin was already preparing a deadly blow to Germany regardless of whether Hitler or anyone else would be in power.

Chapter 13 ABOUT THE 186TH INFANTRY DIVISION

This war will bring about, we firmly believe, a proletarian resolution.
L.Trotsky, "Bulletin of the Opposition", August-September, 1939.

During the course of the Civil War, the Red Army grew. Some divisions died, others were created, the total number increased. The Red Army reached the peak of its power by the beginning of 1920 of the year: 64 rifle and 14 cavalry divisions.

Marshal of the Soviet Union V.D.Sokolovsky. Military Strategy. p.163

After the Civil War, the Red Army was sharply reduced, but the number of rifle divisions did not decrease, but increased. This is not a miracle, it is just that soldiers were let go home and divisions were turned into territorial divisions: there are headquarters and commanders, but no soldiers. A territorial division is a kind of a skeleton, which in case of exercises, natural disasters or war must be filled with soldiers by calling up reservists. The creation of new divisions without soldiers was not costly and did not take the plowman off the land.

In 1923, a rifle division numbered 100 was formed. At that time there were indeed about a hundred rifle divisions (without soldiers), but still they were not a hundred, so assigning such a large number was a stretch and a kind of bragging: there are so many of them... The 100th rifle division with its number seemed to emphasize the upper limit: both in peacetime and in wartime (as the experience of the Civil War showed) so many rifle divisions were enough. In addition to rifle divisions, the Red Army also had cavalry divisions, which had their own number system.

The 100th Rifle Division, as well as the 1st Proletarian Rifle Division, were kept in the best shape: these numbers seem to outline the entire Red Army. One can clearly see the desire of the high command to show that in the Red Army everywhere - from the 1st to the 100th - re-revolutionary order. And if the iron order could not be established everywhere, at least in the 1st and 100th divisions it was. It was not by chance that during the war the 100th Rifle Division was the first to be awarded the Guards rank and became known as the 1st Guards Rifle Division. And by the beginning of the war, the 1st Proletarian Division was transformed from a rifle division into a motorized rifle division and during the war became the 1st Guards Motorized Rifle Division.

In the 20s and 30s, the number of rifle divisions in the Red Army slightly decreased or increased. In the system of division numbers, voids appeared or were filled, but the 100th Rifle Division remained as if it were the upper limit of the Red Army. There was no division with a higher number in the Red Army.

From the beginning of the 1930s, the Red Army began to "build up muscle mass" imperceptibly at first, and then more and more rapidly. Territorial divisions without soldiers gradually turned into cadre divisions with soldiers. The process went faster and faster.

By the end of 1937, a good half of the rifle divisions were transferred from territorial to cadre divisions, and by the end of 1938 all divisions became cadre divisions. And it turned out that at the beginning of August 1939 the Red Army had 96 rifle divisions and one motorized rifle division. All of them were not territorial, but cadre divisions. 96 cadre rifle divisions is more than at the peak of the Civil War, when the regime was fighting for its existence.

On September 1, 1939, the German army attacked Poland, and this date is officially considered the beginning of World War II. This day is so terrible and tragic that everything else that happened on that day has been overshadowed.

Meanwhile, on that very day in Moscow, the 4th extraordinary session of the USSR Supreme Soviet adopted the "Law on Universal Military Duty". The deployment of new rifle divisions began immediately. The voids in the row of numbers from the 1st to the 100th were filled, and immediately appeared rifle divisions with the numbers 101, 102, 103... and then 110, III... 120... 130.....

In order not to go far for examples, let us consider the deployment process on the example of the famous 1st Proletarian Rifle Division (Moscow). In September 1939, the division headquarters was reorganized into the headquarters of a rifle corps. Two regiments of the division were transformed into the 115th and 126th Rifle Divisions. The new rifle corps was immediately transferred to the western border and on September 17 participated in the "liberation" campaign in Poland. Another regiment from the 1st Proletarian Division was left in the capital, and on its basis the new 1st Proletarian Rifle Division was deployed.

There was one division - it became three and the management of a rifle corps. This was also the case in other places: regiments were turned into divisions, divisions into corps.

Let us look at the historical forms of our illustrious divisions and marvel at the fact that many of them were created at the same time. Without getting into the big numbers: the 2nd Guards Tama Division. The Guard rank and the corresponding number were received during the war, and it was created as the 127th Rifle Division in September 1939, when the division numbers were flying higher and higher.

Let's check randomly: 112th, 123rd, 128th, 136th, 138th, 144th, 159th, 163rd, 169th, 170th, 186th and make no mistake: they were all created in the same month. Soviet official sources modestly say about it: "Since the fall of 1939 the deployment of all branches of the Ground Forces began, dozens of new divisions were formed. (Soviet Armed Forces. p. 242).

The process of creating new divisions began not with a smooth build-up, but with a spurt. In September 1939 alone, the numbers of rifle divisions jumped from 100 to 186. A necessary clarification: the chain of numbers from 101st to 186th was not yet continuous, sometimes there were omissions. But in June 1940, Hitler went to France, carelessly turning his back on Stalin. And Stalin ordered the formation of a new wave of rifle divisions. And all the gaps in the numbering were filled.

Another wave of deployment of rifle divisions took place in February - March 1941, when the numbers skipped the number 200, and they were carried higher. Let's look at how the 200th rifle division was created. Let's start with the commander. His name was Ivan Ilyich Lyudnikov. He was born in 1902. He graduated from infantry school, commanded a platoon, a company, was chief of staff of a battalion. He rose during the Great Purge. In 1938 he graduated from the Frunze Academy. In 1938, he graduated from the Frunze Academy and was sent to the General Staff.

On August 19, 1939, an order was issued to establish many new military schools, including the infantry school in Zhitomir, the head of which was appointed Lyudnikov. February 22, 1941 People's Commissar of Defense gives a secret order on early graduation of cadets of military schools. The graduation will be held without chiefs, and the chiefs of the schools are appointed as commanders of newly formed divisions. Chief of Zhitomir Infantry School Colonel Lyudnikov March 10, 1941 receives an order to arrive at the headquarters of the Kiev Military District, and the chief of staff of the district, Lieutenant General MA Purkaev read him the order on his appointment as commander of the 200th Sd, which he was ordered to form. "I realized that the wait for big events was not long and hurried to the organizational and mobilization department." (I.I.Lyudnikov. Through the thunderstorms. P.23). "In the mobilization department of the district headquarters I was told:

– Your division is in that corner over there, take it. I pick up a sealed bag with a tag from the floor "200 Sdn. Mailbox 1508." Not much in the bag. Somebody even made a joke about it:

– Not Monomakh's hat...

The deadline for the formation of a new division was tight". (I.I. Lyudnikov. The Road Long in Life. P.Z).

A colonel at the age of 38 would become a colonel general in four years. He quite coped with the task at hand in 1941, as he coped with all tasks during the war. Having started from scratch, from one half-empty sack, Lyudnikov formed a division, conducted a combat consolidation of units, parts, headquarters and rear organs, and by the beginning of June, the 200th Rifle Division "was staffed with personnel according to wartime standards and had all means of armament." (VIZH, 1966, N 9, pp. 66-67). This means that the 200th Sd had 14,438 soldiers and officers, hundreds of guns and mortars, 558 vehicles, tanks, armored cars, etc., etc., etc., etc.

The history of mobilization impresses anyone who has studied it with the precision and coherence of the process of preparing the Red Army for an attack. At first, from August 1939, the main forces were devoted to the training of officers, then to early graduation, the formation of the second and third waves of reserve divisions, the transfer of troops from the Far East, Transbaikalia, Siberia, Central Asia, the Caucasus and Transcaucasia.

The 31st Rifle Corps, which was being transferred from the Far East and which was to include the 200th Rifle Corps, was also in this stream. And there was a TASS report of May 8, 1941 saying that we were not transferring any troops from the Far East. But they were arriving, among them the 31st Rifle Corps, Colonel Lyudnikov's 200th Rifle Corps was part of it, conducting the last exercises.

And finally - the TASS report of June 13. And now the division was raised on alert and received the order to march to the border town of Kovel in several night crossings, carefully camouflaged in the forests during the daytime... "The whole population of the town came out to see the division off. The most fervent assurances that we were going on exercises could not comfort our mothers and wives. The premonition of a near disaster did not deceive them.

Kissing my wife and sons, I had almost no doubt that I was going to war". (I.I. Lyudnikov. Do-

life-long horns. C.4). And then came the surprise attack. I have always been surprised by this inconsistency: millions of people knew that they were going to war, and their wives knew, and mothers, and fathers, and children knew, but no one expected the German attack. It was sudden for everyone.

Colonel-General I.I. Lyudnikov is a smart commander. In 1945, he would demonstrate the highest class of skill in defeating Japanese divisions that were not expecting an attack. But how to reconcile the facts: in March 1941, Ludnikov was summoned to the mobilization department of the headquarters of the border district and ordered to form a division with a number twice as big as the largest one; he formed the division "according to the wartime staffs" with the understanding that "big events are not long to wait"; when the 200th Division went to the border, Lyudnikov and everyone in the circle realize that they are going to war - and with all this German attack no one was waiting for, it was sudden for everyone...

But everything is simple: everyone knew that there would be war, everyone was expecting war, but... without a German attack. It makes sense to return to the mysterious premonition of war, which was felt by tens of millions of Soviet people, separately. And now - to our divisions. More precisely, to divisions, corps, armies and fronts.

If dozens (and hundreds) of divisions were created, they had to be managed. Some divisions remained separate, that is, directly subordinated to the headquarters of armies or military districts, but in most cases two, three, four divisions made up a rifle corps. That is why, along with the number of divisions grew and the number of rifle corps. By the summer of 1939 the Red Army had 25 rifle corps, in the fall their number doubled. The numbers of rifle corps crept up and quickly jumped to 50, and then 60.

But corps must also be managed. And that's why September 1939 is rich in a crop of new armies.

In this whole story I was interested in another seemingly very minor detail. Soviet divisions and corps were massively deployed in September 1939. The birthday of a regiment, division, corps in the Red Army is considered the day of presentation of the battle flag. But the banner can not be handed to an empty place. It is like on a warship: its history records the day when the naval flag was raised for the first time. But in order to raise the flag, it is necessary to build the ship beforehand. And construction begins with the laying down, or to be more precise - with the project. It is the same with a division: before it can be presented with the battle flag, it must be formed, and formation begins with the appointment of a commander. I was not interested in the moment when the battle flag was handed over, but in the moment when the very first person appeared in the division - the commander who was ordered to make a division out of nothing.

Divisions in those days grew thick, unstoppable and fast, like bamboo shoots after a tropical downpour. Of all the divisions known to have been formed in September 1939, I chose the one with the highest number, the 186th, and began searching for the day it was first mentioned in documents, the day when the division did not yet exist but a commander was appointed, received a skinny sealed sack labeled "186 SD" and the order to form it.

The commander of the 186th Infantry Division was Col. (from June 4, 1940

– Major General N.I. Biryukov. It remained to find the date when he was appointed commander. I spent 3 years searching for the date. The time was not wasted: I was looking for one thing, and in the meantime I found a lot of other things. Also interesting.

Finally found what I was looking for: the order to form the 186th Infantry Division and the appointment of the commander was signed August 19, 1939.

That night I stayed up until dawn singing songs, looking up at the sky, reading old poems. It was the joy of a lonely mountaineer who had climbed to the summit "where no one had ever been". Maybe no one needs my findings, maybe they won't understand me, but for me personally I made a discovery, even if small, but a discovery.

And in the morning had to start a new job: a hunch to confirm or deny. It could be that Stalin took Stalin and ordered August 19, 1939 to create just one division, immediately jumping from number 100 to 186.

We had to check many other divisions and the service records of marshals and generals, who in August 1939 were not yet marshals and generals, but were only prospective colonels. In general, in 1939 there were no generals in the Red Army, but there were kombrigs, kommdivs, and komkors.

Checking a formula is easier than deriving it. I did. It was confirmed: in September 1939 dozens of new divisions and corps were created, and the decision on their creation and appointment of commanders was made on August 19, 1939. Here are a few examples. Anyone can type them by dozens.

Combrig P.S. Pshennikov (later Lieutenant General) became commander of the 142nd Rifle Division on August 19, 1939. The division did not yet exist, but the commander was appointed and the formation began.

Colonel J. G. Kreizer (later Army General) became commander of the 172nd Infantry Division that day.

Combrig I.F. Dashichev (later Major-General) became commander of the 47th Rifle Corps. Komkor F.I. Golikov (later Marshal of the Soviet Union) was ordered to form and lead the 6th Army in August 1939.

Not only divisions and corps were being formed at that time, but armies as well.

Colonel S.S. Biryuzov (later Marshal of the Soviet Union) on August 19, 1939 became the commander of the now defunct 132nd Rifle Division.

Combrig A.D. Berezin (from June 5, 1940, major general) was appointed commander of the 119th Infantry Division on that day. The date can be read quite openly, for example, in the "Military Historical Journal" (1986, N 2, p.86). And this date is August 19, 1939.

The list could go on for a languidly long time. I think these examples are enough to understand: on August 19, 1939 Stalin ordered to double the number of infantry divisions. They were already more than in any army in the world. Double - meant that the pre-mobilization period was completed and mobilization began.

Both then and 50 years later, the fact that mobilization had begun was concealed, because it was a secret mobilization. To disguise it, a "partial mobilization" was announced on September 2. If it was a partial mobilization, it should have been announced one day, but no one stopped the "partial" mobilization and no demobilization was announced. And it continued, gaining strength and speed. Secret mobilization was conducted under the direction of the Chief of the General Staff, Marshal of the Soviet Union B.M. Shaposhnikov, the same one who understood himself and convinced Stalin that there can be no partial mobilization, it can only be universal, and that mobilization is not a step towards war, but the war itself. On August 19, 1939, Europe was still living a peaceful life, and Stalin had already made his decision and started the mobilization machine in a REAL movement, which in any case and under any international circumstances made World War II completely inevitable.

Many historians think that Stalin first decided to sign peace with Hitler, and then decided to prepare a surprise attack on Germany. And it suddenly dawned on me that there were not two different decisions. Signing peace with Germany and finally deciding on the inevitable invasion of Germany were one decision, two parts of a single plan.

On September 1, 1939, Hitler attacked Poland, and that date is considered the beginning of World War II. Let this tragic day remain the official date of the beginning of the Second World War. Hitler is a villain and a monster. But let us not forget that there was another more cunning monster in the world called Stalin.

I don't know when Hitler intended to start World War II. But in September 1939, Germany could not attack Poland. It couldn't, because it could have entailed war and a naval blockade by Britain and France. And that's exactly what happened. And Hitler should have foreseen and calculated the consequences of his actions. For a war at sea, Germany had to have a powerful navy. In 1939, Germany did not have one. The German ship-building program envisaged 6 battleships by 1944, 4 heavy cruisers by 1943 and 4 more by 1945, 4 light cruisers by 1944 and 13 more by 1948, 2 aircraft carriers by 1941 and 2 more by 1947. The same deadlines were given for the construction of the submarine fleet. In any case, Hitler had to postpone the attack on Poland until 1944-1945.

It is proven without me that in 1939 Hitler had no intention of starting a European war, much less a world war. It is proven without me that German industry in 1939 was operating in peacetime mode, that there were no intentions or plans to convert it to wartime mode. It is also proven that on September 3, 1939, Hitler was shocked to learn that Britain and the

France declared war on him. Hitler did not foresee such a turn of events.

And Stalin, on August 19, 1939, made decisions that could not be reversed, that left the Soviet Union no other option but war.

Therefore, I consider August 19 as a borderline of war, after which, under any circumstances, World War II should have taken place. And if Hitler had not started it on September 1, 1939, Stalin would have had to look for another opportunity or even another perpetrator to push Europe and the world into war. That is the essence of my little discovery.

On August 23, 1939, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed in the Kremlin. It was a thrilling, exciting event, and its participants could not have imagined that the impassive camera would capture more than the organizers wanted. And the camera did: Molotov and Ribbentrop signing the treaty, with Stalin and Shaposhnikov whispering behind them like two conspirators.

They have something to whisper about. The Soviet Union has already passed the secret pre-mobilization period and entered the period of secret mobilization, which in itself is already a war. Stalin and Shaposhnikov know that they have created a situation where, in Shaposhnikov's own words, "there can be no return to peacetime."

In the Soviet Union, rifle divisions with numbers over a hundred are already being formed. The Soviet Union is already training tens of thousands of pilots for the Ivanov airplane. And the development of the airplane has been completed and it is ready for real mass production. The Soviet Union is already forming dozens of new military schools to produce officers by the hundreds of thousands. The Soviet Union is already building gunpowder and shell factories to the point where war is inevitable in the coming years.

Stalin and Shaposhnikov are whispering behind Ribbentrop's back, they know that the Soviet Union is already at war, although the guns are not yet firing.

Chapter 14 WHEN WAS THE 112TH ARMORED DIVISION FORMED?

*On the eve of the war AL Getman was appointed commander of the 112th Tank Division.
General of the Army I.I.Gusakovsky, VIZH, 1973, N10, p.117.*

The last Minister of Defense of the USSR and the last Marshal of the Soviet Union, D.T. Yazov, in his books, articles and public speeches said that 125 new divisions had been formed in the Soviet Union during the incomplete two years before the war. We find mention of 125 new divisions, for example, in his book "True to Duty" (p. 178).

Let's compare: at the height of the Cold War, the U.S. Army had 16 divisions, the British Army -
4. To form one new division in a democratic country is a year's worth of parliamentary debates. And Stalin, according to Marshal Yazov, in less than two years formed 125 divisions in addition to those he had before. Can this be believed? It cannot be believed.

Anyone who collects information about Soviet divisions knows that Marshal Yazov was, to put it mildly, lying. That is why I wrote a letter to the chief historian of the Soviet Army, Colonel-General Dmitry Volkogonov: the bravery of a soldier is to march on the enemy's bayonets, the bravery of a military historian is to publicly oppose a senior superior if he deviates from the historical truth. I do not know whether Colonel-General Volkogonov received my letter or not, but he could have protested without my letter. But he didn't.

All Soviet military historians heard Yazov's statements, but none of them had the courage to object. And then I wrote a letter to Yazov himself: Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union, you don't say everything or... you don't know everything.

Let's listen to other opinions about the number of new divisions. Marshal of the Soviet Union K.S. Moskalenko: "From September 1939 to June 1941, 125 new rifle divisions were deployed." (On the southwestern direction. p. 9).

Marshal of the Soviet Union I.H. Baghramyan: "125 new rifle divisions and many formations and units of other branches of the army were formed. (This is how we went to Victory. P.39).

Do you feel the difference? Yazov talks about 125 new divisions, while Moskalenko and Baghramyan talk about

125 new rifle divisions. Marshal Yazov deliberately or through ignorance omitted the word "rifle divisions." And the omission of one word changes the meaning, because in addition to the 125 new rifle divisions Stalin formed other divisions, such as motorized rifle and motorized divisions. From September 1939 to June 1941, 30 new motorized divisions were formed. Rifle, motorized rifle and motorized divisions had a common numbering system, so already in March 1941 in this system appeared numbers 250, 251, 252 and so on. And all the gaps in the numbering system were filled.

In addition, tank divisions were formed. In one year alone, from June 1940 to June 1941, 61 new tank divisions were formed. The tank divisions had their own numbering system from 1 to 69. The presence of gaps indicated that the process of division formation was still ongoing.

In just under a year, from July 1940 to June 1941, 79 new air divisions were formed. And for Stalin this was not the limit: the numbers went higher and higher. In April 1941, the 81st long-range bomber aviation division was already being formed near Smolensk... Could it be that the Soviet divisions were tiny? Not at all - German tank divisions in June 1941 had different organizational structure and different number of tanks: from 147 in the 13th to 299 in the 7th tank division. The tanks were light and medium tanks. Germany had no heavy tanks at all. Soviet tank division in 1941 - 375 light, medium and heavy tanks. Sometimes divisions were not fully manned, for example, the 1st Tank Division entered the war with 370 tanks and 53 armored vehicles. (Lieutenant General V.I. Baranov. VIZh, 1988, N 9, p.18).

The German motorized divisions of 1941 had no tanks. The Soviet motorized divisions of 1941 had 275 tanks.

The only German cavalry division had no tanks, the Soviet cavalry divisions had 64 tanks each.

German infantry divisions had no tanks, standard Soviet infantry divisions had 16 tanks each. Some Soviet rifle divisions had 60-70 tanks each. For example, the 4th German Proletariat Rifle Division entered the war with 64 tanks. (Lieutenant-General I.P. Roslyi. The Last Halt in Berlin. p. 32).

Soviet aviation divisions had 200 airplanes, and 300. Sometimes even 400.

Example: 9th Mixed Aviation - had 409 combat aircraft as of June 21.

The total count for the incomplete two years - not 125 new divisions, as Marshal Yazov says, but 295 new divisions ...

Unless, of course, you count the new NKVD motorized rifle divisions.

But 295 new divisions are not the end of the story. Once I visited the museum of the 8th Guards Motorized Rifle Division named after Hero of the Soviet Union Major-General I.V. Panfilov. The division is one of the most old ones. Each of us studied its history in childhood: it was formed in July 1941 as the 316th Rifle Division; its first commander was Major-General I.V. Panfilov; in October it was transferred to Moscow; the famous battle of 28 Panfilov heroes... There, near Moscow, the division distinguished itself and was transformed into the 8th Guards Rifle Division. I knew all this before visiting the museum, but the instinct of a hunting dog demanded to sniff every bush twice, three times, four times. And I was lucky.

Among the many documents and relics I saw a yellow leaf with small letters - the order on the formation of the division. Thousands of museum visitors had read this order before me. Or maybe they looked at it and did not read it. Or maybe they did read it, but did not pay attention to the most important thing. At first glance, the order is just like an order: to form, to appoint, etc., etc., etc. But the date!

The date is June 12, 1941. The next day - June 13, TASS broadcasts a "country-specific" message that the USSR is not going to attack Germany. And at this time, the numbers of Soviet rifle divisions have already passed the figure of 300.

And I could not believe that earlier there was created a rifle division with the number 252, and suddenly after it immediately - 316. It couldn't be like that. And therefore began to check other numbers and found that the 261st, 272nd, 289th, 291st, 302nd and many with them were formed in July 1941, but the orders for their formation were given BEFORE the German attack.

Therefore, we must say that Stalin in less than two years formed 125 new

In addition, before the German invasion he began to form at least 60 more rifle, motorized and motorized divisions.

Checked the tank divisions as well. Stalin had 61 of them. Officially. And in fact, already in March 1941, the numbers of Soviet tank divisions jumped past the figure of 100, and they were carried higher and higher. And it is not necessary to dig into top secret archives to confirm this. It's enough to look in the book *The Great Patriotic War. Encyclopedia*, (p.206). This book passed the state and military censorship, it was edited by Army General M.M. Kozlov, Colonel-General G.V. Sredin, Lieutenant-General P.A. Zhilin and many other famous generals, professors, doctors of science, corresponding members, etc., edited it. From this scientific work we learn that Army General A.L. Getman (in 1941 - colonel) became the commander of the 112th Tank Division in March 1941. There is also other information on this subject.

If someone from military historians doubts, it is necessary just to check information about all other tank divisions with three-digit numbers, for example, about III-i tank division. It was located in Transbaikalia. On June 22 after the message about the German attack everywhere there were rallies of the population, as well as personnel of military units in the rear areas. The history of the Transbaikal Military District (Order of Lenin Transbaikal, p. 96) reports that on June 22, 1941 "rallies of personnel were held in the units of the 36th and 57th motorized rifle divisions, 61st and 111th tank divisions. The rallies of outraged soldiers could not have taken place in the 111th Tank Division if it had not existed.

Let every history buff look into his collection of materials on the history of Soviet divisions and support me: on June 21, 1941 there were already at least the following tank divisions - 101st Colonel G.M. Mikhailov, 102nd Colonel I.D. Illarionov, 104th Colonel V.G. Burkov, 106th Colonel A.N. Pervushin, 107th Colonel P.N. Domrachev.

It will be argued that not all of them were fully manned. Marshal of the Soviet Union I.S. Konev, for example, says that in September 1941 the 107th Tank Division had only 153 tanks. (VIZH, 1966, N 10, p.56). This is indeed true, but it is a remnant after the brutal Battle of Smolensk. A remnant of 153 tanks is not a small number. At the beginning of September 1941, of all German tank divisions on the Eastern Front, only two could match the number of serviceable tanks: the 6th - 188 and the 8th - 155 tanks.

Now let's remember that in September 1939, Hitler entered World War II with SIX tank divisions. The vast majority of the tanks were light tanks. The entire German Army had 211 medium tanks as of August 31, 1939. There were no heavy tanks in service with the army or in development, and the question of developing heavy tanks was not raised in Germany. Having subjected this to scientific analysis, some historians came to the conclusion: since Hitler had 6 divisions of light tanks, it means that he intends to conquer the whole world.

In the spring of 1941, the "neutral" Stalin formed more tank divisions than had existed in ALL TIMES IN ALL COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD Taken Together, both during and after Stalin's time. The Soviet Union in 1941 was the only country in the world to have heavy tanks in service with its army.

And the question arises to historians: if 6 divisions of light tanks are undeniable evidence of the desire to start a war and take over the world, what is the evidence of the creation of 61 tank divisions in one year and the beginning of the deployment of the same number of tank divisions?

No country in the world can maintain 60 tank divisions. I am not talking about a hundred or more tank divisions. In addition to tank divisions, Stalin had more than 300 rifle and motorized divisions. And no other country in the world can keep this number of divisions. I am not talking about aviation and all other divisions. You can't even keep them in a reduced form. And they were not kept in a reduced form - they were quickly filled with soldiers and weapons. And that meant only determination to fight. To fight already in 1941. To fight even before all divisions were fully staffed.

If all of this was fully staffed, the economy would collapse immediately.

This is why the genius Carl von Clausewitz believed that "by the very nature of war, it is impossible to achieve complete simultaneous readiness of all forces for immediate, simultaneous engagement.

That is why Stalin prepared a powerful army, but in addition - an inexhaustible reserve of divisions, which have just begun to form. In the course of the war to complete the formation is easier than to form new divisions, starting from scratch.

Hitler had none of that. He threw against Stalin 17 tank divisions, which were not fully staffed and which were not reinforced by anything. All German tanks on the Eastern Front were distributed in four tank groups. In each tank group from 8 to 15 divisions, including 3-5 tank, 2-3 motorized, the rest infantry. On September 4, 1941, Colonel-General G. Guderian's 2nd Tank Group had 190 tanks left. The tank group turned into an understaffed tank division, and the tank divisions within it turned into tank battalions: the 3rd Tank Division had 41 serviceable tanks, the 4th - 49, the 17th - 38, and the 18th - 62. In addition, there was a catastrophic shortage of spare parts and fuel for tanks. All this until the fall, until heavy rains and mud, until the thaw and until the beginning of the Russian winter, until snow and frost, which Hitler and his generals should have remembered.

Historians are still arguing about what Hitler should have done in early September 1941: to throw Guderian's tank group to bypass Kiev or to move it directly to Moscow. These arguments surprise me: after the tank group had a quarter of the original number of tanks left, it should be thrown not against Kiev and not against Moscow, but should be withdrawn for re-forming and re-staffing. And instead of it to introduce fresh tank divisions, corps and groups into the battle. But Hitler did not take care of that. Stalin did.

In addition to the fully manned tank divisions, he had second-wave divisions, not fully manned, and third-wave and fourth-wave divisions. After the first strikes and open mobilization, the armored divisions could be manned and, when ready, could be put into battle by the dozens.

The main thing is that the Leningrad and Kharkov plants were producing so many tanks that they would have been sufficient (provided that we attacked) to make up for losses in existing divisions and to complete the divisions being formed. This gave Stalin the opportunity to make up for losses in the divisions fighting the war, and gradually introduce new tank divisions into battle, bringing their number on the battlefields to a hundred and more.

With his suicidal attack, with only 17 panzer divisions, Hitler prevented Stalin from deploying Soviet tank power. Kharkiv was lost, Leningrad was blockaded.

Production of tanks in Gorky, Chelyabinsk, Nizhny Tagil, Stalingrad - improvisation. But even this improvised tank production allowed the Soviet Union to produce tanks in larger quantities and better quality and to end the war in Berlin.

If Stalin had struck first, tank production in the Soviet Union could have been monstrous. This is what was meant when the order was given in March 1941 to form a tank division with the number 112.

Chapter 15 OF ARTILLERY REGIMENTS

Our artillery is offensive artillery. The Red Army will burst into the enemy land with a hurricane and will sweep the enemy off the face of the earth with murderous artillery fire. T.I.Letunov. Speech at the XVIII Party Congress, March 18, 1939.

In June 1939, the Red Army field artillery had 144 artillery regiments. Each regiment had 24-36 guns. That's a lot. I emphasize: we are talking only about artillery regiments and only in the field artillery. We are not talking about anti-aircraft artillery regiments, artillery regiments of fortified areas, coastal artillery of the fleet; now we are skipping artillery units that were part of rifle battalions and regiments, cavalry formations and units, airborne troops, NKVD troops; we are skipping individual batteries and divisions of artillery of great and special power. 144 regiments of field artillery were distributed simply: - in the subordination of each-.

Each commander of a rifle (motorized rifle) division had one artillery regiment (152-mm and 122-mm howitzers); a total of 95 regiments;

- one artillery regiment (152-mm howitzer-guns and 122-mm guns) subordinate to each commander of a rifle corps; a total of 25 regiments;

- there were 24 artillery regiments (203-mm howitzers, 152-mm guns and howitzer-guns) subordinate to the Red Army Main Command; these were the Reserve of the Main Command - RGK. On August 19, 1939, Stalin decided to increase the number of rifle divisions. Each new division required an artillery regiment. For the management of divisions were created management of rifle corps. Each commander of a rifle corps also needed his own artillery regiment. For quantitative and qualitative reinforcement of divisions and corps in the main directions the regiments of the RGK are required. Consequently, it is necessary to increase their number.

In short, on August 19, 1939, it was decided to increase the number of field artillery regiments from 144 to 341. And there were more of them than in all the armies of the world combined.

A regular rifle division has 1 artillery and 3 rifle regiments. In the summer of 1939, two new rifle divisions of unusual organization were formed specially for sending to Khalkhin-Gol: each division had 2 artillery and 3 rifle regiments. The divisions of the new organization showed themselves to the best advantage in a surprise attack. And Zhukov proposed to extend the innovation to the entire Red Army: each division commander - two artillery regiments. And two more for each commander of a rifle corps.

September 13, 1939 Stalin approves the proposal, and the deployment of new artillery regiments begins. The number of divisions and corps grows, and the number of artillery regiments in their composition grows twice as fast: they are now required 577. Surprising turned out to be the organizational structure of the rifle corps. Earlier in the corps of standard organization (3 divisions) the total number of regiments was as follows: 9 rifle and 4 artillery, and since September 1939 - 9 rifle and 8 artillery. Such a corps only in name was a rifle corps, in fact the corps became a rifle-artillery corps. This remark is all the more true because the artillery regiments consisted of artillery only, while the rifle regiments consisted of infantry and artillery.

If we counted all the rifle companies and artillery batteries in the corps, we would be surprised to find that there were almost one and a half times as many artillery batteries as rifle companies. Compared to the infantry corps of foreign armies, the Soviet rifle corps was the smallest in number of soldiers (especially in the rear units), but dramatically outnumbered any foreign corps in firepower.

In addition to increasing the number of artillery regiments, there were other ways in which the saturation of troops with artillery went on. Until the fall of 1939, each rifle division had 18 anti-tank 45-mm guns. After Khalkhin-Gol their number in each division increased to 54. Outwardly the same division, but three times as many anti-tank guns.

The 45 mm anti-tank gun has been ridiculed by some historians. However, this gun was extremely maneuverable because it was light. It had a low silhouette, which made it easy to camouflage in anti-tank ambushes. The most important requirement for an anti-tank gun is the ability to penetrate any enemy tank.

In 1941, the Soviet 45-mm gun had this capability. In addition, a 57-mm anti-tank gun was created. It was not produced simply because there were no worthy targets for it. As soon as intelligence reported the appearance of heavy tanks in the German army, the 57-mm gun was put into production, and until the end of the war it was able to cope with the tasks at hand, especially since it was soon assisted by a heavy-duty 100-mm anti-tank gun.

The rifle troops were also saturated with mortars. In the fall of 1939, the number of mortars in each rifle battalion was increased. Each regimental commander received his own mortar battery. In addition, some division commanders received three mortar batteries each.

But now we are talking about artillery regiments. In addition to rifle divisions, motorized and tank divisions were formed. One artillery regiment was formed for each of these divisions.

And then decisions were made to increase the number of rifle divisions to 300 and

upwards, tank regiments up to 100 or more. And to form artillery regiments for them. And ten artillery brigades of the Russian State Artillery Committee were created, each with two artillery regiments (66 guns in each regiment, including 107-mm guns). But that was not all.

In addition to divisions, rifle brigades were created. Their standard organization: a separate tank battalion, two rifle regiments and one artillery regiment. Examples: the 3rd Rifle Brigade (commanded by Colonel P.M. Gavrilov) consisted of a tank battalion, the 41st and 156th Rifle Regiments and the 39th Artillery Regiment; the 8th Rifle Brigade (commanded by Colonel N.P. Simonyak) consisted of a tank battalion, the 270th and 335th Rifle Regiments and the 343rd Artillery Regiment.

In addition to rifle corps, 29 mechanized corps were formed. As a rule, the commander of a mechanized corps did not have his own artillery. But this is the rule. And in the rule of exceptions. In the area of Lvov, among other troops, a blow to Germany was preparing a blow to the 4th Mechkorps of Major-General AA Vlasov. Two tank and one motorized division of this corps had their own artillery regiments, in addition, the 441st and 445th corps artillery regiments were directly subordinated to the corps commander.

Another example. In late May - early June, the 16th Army was transferred from Transbaikalia to Ukraine. It was composed of the 5th Mechkorps of Major-General I. P. Alekseenko. Each division commander had his own artillery regiment, in addition, the corps commander himself had at his direct disposal the 467th and 578th corps artillery regiments.

And that's not all: in addition to the Red Army, motorized rifle divisions of the NKVD Osnaz were formed. Each such division had a howitzer artillery regiment in its composition. Historians suggest that NKVD units should not be taken into account. The reasoning is that these were selected divisions, which had the most modern weaponry and personally selected people, up to and including the last soldier. If they are the best, historians say, then they are not counted. Let's not argue. But even if the NKVD is not counted, even then the number of artillery regiments in the Red Army even before the German invasion exceeded 900. The growth continued.

It is justifiable to wonder if Stalin was playing the same game as Hitler. Hitler formed all new tank divisions... by reducing the number of tanks in the old divisions. In 1939 Hitler had 6 tank divisions, in 1940 - 10, in 1941 - 20; the number of tanks did not change significantly.

No, Stalin did not play these games. The number of tank formations grew, but also the number of tanks in each formation grew. Similarly, the number of artillery regiments was growing, but the number of guns in each regiment was also growing. For example, in the regiments of the RGK armed with 152-mm gauss-guns, the number of guns increased from 36 to 48. And in anti-tank regiments - up to 66.

At the same time, field artillery was also growing in Germany. But let's pay attention to the names of guns and howitzers: in most cases their indices contain the numbers "13" or "18". This is the year of creation of the gun. Germany had good artillery, but in the vast majority of cases the field artillery was based on models created during the First World War. In addition, the German artillery was supplemented by captured guns from nine captured countries. In total, the German artillery had guns and howitzers from ten different countries, 28 different calibers, which made the problem of ammunition supply very difficult. Many of the captured guns were created in the previous century and were up to 50 years old.

The formation of Soviet artillery regiments was based on new models created in 1938, adopted for service in 1939, and produced by industry in 1940-1941.

Between 1939 and June 1941, the Red Army received 82,000 of the latest artillery guns and mortars. Almost all Soviet guns in 1941 were of the best quality in the world and remained so until the end of the war. Among them is the 122-mm howitzer M-ZO - developed in 1938, tested at Khalkhin-Gol, adopted for service in September 1939, in service with some armies of the world until the end of the XX century.

How badly all this fits in with the usual notions that Stalin believed Hitler, that Stalin did not prepare for war.

Anyone who has studied military history will object that Soviet artillery regiments were not fully supplied with traction. In addition, the artillery used a powerful, but slow-moving

tractor. That's a good point.

However, this circumstance is not as terrible as it may seem at first sight. The experience of the war has shown that when Soviet troops were assigned the task of defense, and the troops buried themselves in the ground, i.e. dug full profile trenches, equipped dugouts, firing positions for tanks and artillery, covered the front line with anti-tank ditches, minefields, wire and other barriers, the enemy could not break through such defenses. Examples: Leningrad, Moscow, Stalingrad, Kursk.

All strategic breakthroughs of German troops during the war succeeded only when Soviet troops were forbidden to burrow into the ground and prepare defenses. Examples: June 1941 - along the entire border, Kharkov - in May 1942, Crimean front - in the same month. In 1941 the Red Army had the fortunate opportunity to create an impregnable defense from sea to sea. After signing the pact with Hitler, Stalin had two years, the defense could be built.

It was not in a clear field, as at the Kursk Bulge, but resting on the reinforced concrete forts of the "Stalin Line". And 500-600 artillery regiments should have been placed there, in this defense, equipping several firing positions for each gun, carefully camouflaged and concealed. And the RGK artillery should be kept in reserve, as it should be, and transferred to wherever the enemy was stronger. In this case, tractors and cars would be enough: ammunition was prepared in advance and hidden in dugouts not far from the firing positions, and the artillery tractors had only one job: to pull one or another gun from one firing position to another at night.

But Soviet generals and marshals were not interested in the defensive version of the war. They were preparing an offensive. But for an offensive, tractors and cars are not needed all at once either.

And one should understand why.

When preparing offensive operations, artillery was never moved en masse: firstly, because even before the offensive you would scare the enemy and give him the direction of the main blow; secondly, because it was simply impossible to pull up simultaneously, say, 200 guns for each kilometer of the breakthrough front and the corresponding amount of ammunition. Therefore, before the offensive, shelters were prepared for the guns at night and artillery and all ammunition were gradually pulled to the areas of the future breakthrough. By morning everything was carefully camouflaged, and the next night everything was repeated. For this kind of work it was not at all necessary to have a hauler for each gun.

The offensive began with artillery work, after which tanks and infantry went into the breakthrough, while the bulk of the artillery remained in place. Mobile formations had only a relatively small amount of artillery to support them. After a few days or weeks far in the depths of the enemy's defense the offensive was exhausted, the troops stopped, consolidated their lines and went on the defensive. The command chose a new breakthrough site, and everything started all over again: artillery and ammunition were brought to this site for many nights in a row. In offensive warfare, Soviet artillery was in any case moved not all together, but by rolls.

In addition, on M-Day, after the announcement of open mobilization, it was planned to transfer 240 thousand cars and 43 thousand tractors from the national economy to the army. This was quite enough to supplement the means of traction where they were lacking.

The defeat happened because the German army launched a surprise attack at the very moment when Soviet artillery was being moved to the borders at night. Along with the artillery came a corresponding amount of ammunition. The artillery was not prepared for a defensive war, and could not launch an offensive on June 22: the artillery was already on the borders, but the infantry had not yet arrived. And it was necessary to withdraw the entire mass of Soviet artillery from the borders at once. Only in this situation the lack of tractors and their slow speed turned into a catastrophe: the artillery died or was taken by the enemy together with ammunition....

Disaster could have been avoided if artillery and ammunition had not been gathered at the border. Even a week before the war (if Stalin had really feared Hitler) it was still possible to pull back the artillery. But the process was reversed.

Marshal of the Soviet Union K.K. Rokossovsky: "The troops were ordered to send artillery to the firing ranges located in the border zone". (Soldier's Duty. Moscow, Voenizdat, 1968, p.8). One wonders why artillery should be engaged in combat training near the borders, is the Soviet Union small, can't there be found a more suitable place? We resent that

some idiot in the General Staff giving stupid orders. But let's not be indignant. The orders were given not by an idiot, but by the great invincible G.K. Zhukov. This is exactly what he did before the surprise attack on Khalkhin-Gol: infantry and tanks in their bulk keep in the depth, so as not to show signs of preparation for the offensive and not to give away the directions of the main blows. They will approach the front line in the very last night, and the slow-moving artillery to the front line Zhukov put forward in advance.

It's the right thing to do for a war of aggression. But the same thing would have turned into a disaster if the Japanese had gone on the offensive. This is exactly what happened on June 22, 1941: Soviet artillery was already at the borders, but infantry and tanks were not there yet.

The artillery of the combat troops was transferred to the border areas, but in addition, new artillery units were formed in the border areas. 900 artillery regiments was not the limit. More and more new regiments were formed, especially the heavy regiments of the RGK. Colonel-General L.M. Sandalov, as something insignificant, in three lines reports that 480 152-mm guns were brought to the rear of the 4th Army and began the formation of ten new artillery regiments of the RGK. The regiments were not formed in time, the Germans attacked, and there were no crews near the guns. (And somewhere the crews were left without guns).

Beyond the Dnieper and the Volga there are training grounds for combat training and training centers for forming new units. It would seem better to form regiments in the Urals, train them, conduct drills and live firing exercises, and then load them on echelons and move them to the western border. Why did they bring the guns but not the men? Why are regiments formed in border areas where they can be hit before they can be manned? It all seems like idiocy. But if we remember that this is preparation for an offensive, the same actions are perceived differently. It makes sense.

If a RGK artillery regiment is formed and manned far from the borders and then moved to the borders, it will not go unnoticed. The arrival of even one RGK regiment is thought-provoking. The arrival of ten RGK regiments would cause the enemy to panic. That's why guns were moved to the borders in small batches at night without calculations (in the army they say - placer). And somewhere else commanders and soldiers were preparing.

At the last moment, thousands of soldiers and officers arrive in the border areas, but without tractors, without guns, without ammunition. Their arrival is not paid much attention to: a lot of people without guns - it looks like infantry. But the guns, tractors, ammunition are already hidden in the border forests. The soldiers receive their guns, grease them, and the ten regiments are ready for battle.

I can imagine 480 guns on one field. Colonel General L.M. Sandalov does not specify what kind of guns we are talking about. But it can only be about the 152-mm howitzer-cannon ML-20 or 152-mm gun Br-2. The howitzer-gun ML-20 weighed over 7 tons, and the Br-2 gun weighed over 18 tons. The 480 guns are rows over the horizon.

It is hard to imagine another in the border areas: 10 ammunition kits were stocked for each gun. One ammunition pack was 60 shells, 10 ammunition packs were 600. One shell for ML-20 weighs 43.6 kg, for Br-2 - 48.8 kg. Each shell is packed in a separate box. There are 288,000 boxes for 480 guns. But guns of such caliber have not unitary loading, but separate loading. First we load the shell, and then we load the shell casing separately. The shell casings and charges are packed in separate crates. That's just as many more crates. Let's imagine.

These are only ten new regiments of the RGK, they are secretly forming behind the 4th Army's battle orders. But the 4th Army is not on the main line - On the main lines are the 10th Army of the Western Front in the Bialystok bulge, the 6th Army of the South-Western Front in the Lvov bulge, and the 9th Army of the Southern Front on the Romanian border. Can one imagine what was going on in their rear areas? Can one imagine all 900 regiments already formed and an unknown number of secretly formed regiments? Can one imagine the mountains of green boxes with shells for all these regiments?

Only those who can imagine all this (I can't) will be able to fully understand the meaning of Marshal B.M. Shaposhnikov's words: MOBILIZATION IS WAR. First, Stalin created the People's Commissariat of Munitions, and the logical consequence of this was an explosion-like process of forming artillery regiments capable of absorbing the entire torrent of shells.

And the consequence of the creation of artillery regiments could only be the war. Moreover, already in 1941, because the Soviet generals could not keep ten artillery regiments in the open air for a long time.

for 900 artillery regiments. THEY COULDN'T.

Chapter 16 OF THE WISE HIGH COUNCIL

We have to exploit the opposites and contradictions between the two systems of capitalist states, pitting them against each other.

V.Lenin.

Until 1939, there was no universal military duty in the Soviet Union. Not everyone was taken into the army, but on a choice basis. This is understandable: we are peace-loving people.

Conscription age is 21. That's what I don't understand. It would not be possible to draft after school at 18 or 19, let the guy serve and be free. And so by the age of 21 a man could find a job and start a family, but there is uncertainty ahead: whether he will be drafted or not.

And no one can explain why they should enlist at the age of 21 and not earlier.

A great meaning was put into this system. It was like a dam on the river, not everyone was allowed to pass through it, only some, and the rest accumulated. At the right moment, it was possible to introduce universal military duty (just think of a pretext) and all those who had not served in the army before could be called under the banner. For many years there were so many of them.

The moment had arrived - September 1, 1939. On that day, universal military duty was introduced. And everyone who had not served before started to be drafted.

In each individual case, the drafting of a mature man into the army did not arouse suspicion that a big war was being prepared: they took him into the army, his family was crying, but everyone understood: our Vanya was already 30, but he had not served before, it was time for him to serve....

And to make the call clear at all, we needed small but regular wars on the borders. It was good if they ended well, but not bad if they ended badly.

The call during conflicts and small wars is self-explanatory. And so the conflicts went on and on, as if they had been organized by someone on commission - from Khasan itself to the Danube Delta and the centuries-old forests of Finland. Young and not-so-young guys are drafted - a "liberation" campaign to Poland is being prepared. And after the campaign they are not allowed to go home. Then the "liberation" of Finland - new recruits. Then the "liberation" of Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Bessarabia. And again recruitments: it was an anxious time....

And Stalin also had a reserve: under the new law on universal military duty, the age of conscription was lowered from 21 to 19, and for some categories to 18. My father was also in this set, he was 18 at the time.

Our long-standing peacefulness and artificially inflated age of conscription allowed us to gather, as behind a dam, the energy of millions. Now Stalin opened the floodgates and used the accumulated energy simultaneously.

All tension is short-lived. The more tension, the sooner we lose strength. Let's ask the strongest man in the world, how long can you hold a 200 kg barbell above your head with your arms outstretched? If we don't believe him, we can try it ourselves. My point is that the simultaneous conscription of three ages at once (this has never happened before), and, in addition, the conscription of all those who have not served before, has put a double burden on the country. On the one hand, the economy was deprived of all these workers, and on the other hand, all of them had to be clothed, clothed, fed, fed, fed, fed, fed, - maintained, housed somewhere (try to place at least one million new soldiers in an empty place).

The Red Army had just recently passed its millionth milestone, and now it was suddenly many millions. New divisions need barracks, headquarters, firing ranges, firing ranges, warehouses, canteens, clubs. And a lot of other things. Try to equip at least one division of 13,000 soldiers. But the main thing is that all these divisions, corps and armies must be armed.

The 1939 set was huge. It was impossible to repeat such a trick a second time. In the following years, there could only be regular conscriptions of people of the same age. By introducing the law in the fall of 1939, Stalin was creating a good situation for the summer of 1941: in two years all the

those drafted will be turned into real soldiers. In addition, there will still be drafts in 1940 and 1941.

It is this cadre army that can start the war. Once the war is entered, all deadlines will be canceled and all those drafted can be kept in the army until victory, supplemented and reinforced by millions of reservists who came through the army in the preceding years and young guys as they mature.

And Stalin and his generals could not fail to realize that in the fall of 1941 the unprecedented call-up of 1939 would have to be sent home. According to the law of 1.09.39, the term of active military service for the most mass categories of servicemen - for privates and junior commanders of land forces - was defined in two years. Consequently, the mass conscription of 1939 strengthened the army for two years, but in the fall of 1941 this strength was to turn into a sharp weakening. The conscription of 1939 would work itself out like water released from a dam, and it would be replaced by a regular conscription. It is not possible to keep those who have served in the army: the disciplines will fall. Only war makes it possible to keep millions of those who have already served in the army and demand obedience from them. And if the Red Army does not enter the war before the fall of 1941, the conscription of 1939 will work in vain, the funds will be spent on its maintenance, and then the soldiers will go home. It would not be possible to bring them back together without great noise and great misunderstanding.

Consequently, by conducting a mass conscription in the fall of 1939, Stalin was setting for himself the maximum possible date of entry into the war - the summer of 1941. If Stalin had planned an attack in 1942, he would have conducted the mass conscription in 1940.

Stalin used the entire stock of conscripts accumulated over many years at once and fully. And there is only one explanation: before September 1, 1939, Stalin made a decision to go to war and set the terms of entry into the war - until September 1, 1941.

The law was passed on September 1, but Stalin ordered an extraordinary session to pass the law in August, at the very moment when he was shaking hands with Ribbentrop in the Kremlin and toasting Adolf Hitler's health.

This is a good time to cut me short with outraged cries. September 1, 1939 was the beginning of the Second World War. The wise Communist Party and the Soviet government tried by all means to prevent the war, but just in case they took the necessary measures...

Totally agree with the wise measures. But another thing is confusing. We now know that World War II began on that day. But back then, no one knew that.

Hitler himself had no idea on September 1 that World War II had begun. On September 3, Britain and France declared war on Hitler. But even then neither Hitler nor the governments of France and Britain thought about World War II. I was not lazy to pick up the British newspapers of that time, starting with the "Time", checked the American newspapers, including the "New York Times". The result is the same everywhere. The world of that time did not perceive the events in Poland as the Second World War.

It was much later that the attack on Poland was considered the beginning of the Second World War, while at that time all newspapers (including Soviet ones) wrote about the German-Polish war. The declaration of war by Britain and France was perceived by all as a political declaration. On September 5, 1939, the U.S. government declared its neutrality in the German-Polish war. The U.S. government, even after Britain and France had officially entered the war, did not consider the war to be a world war or even a European war.

On September 1, no capital in the world, be it Warsaw or Berlin, Washington, Paris or London, suspected that World War II had begun.

Only Moscow knew this and made decisions appropriate to the moment.

Chapter 17

OF PERMANENT MOBILIZATION

The United States of the world (not Europe) is that governmental form of unification and the freedom of nations that we associate with socialism.

V.Lenin, August 23, 1915.

The population of the Soviet Union before World War II was smaller than that of the Russian Empire before the First World War. However, the mobilization potential of the country was immeasurably higher. The difference between the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union is that in the Russian Empire, food shortages led to discontent, the liberal press berated the government, daring young men threw leaflets from rooftops, demonstrators sang red songs, and culminated in revolution.

And in the Soviet Union, there was no liberal press, no daring young men. They were wiped out. And that is why not only in wartime, but also in peacetime, food shortages were chronic, and nobody sang any red songs. Food shortage even in peacetime repeatedly resulted in ferocious famine with millions of victims. But those glorious times have passed when one could go out to protest.

Stalin prepared the country for war seriously and knew that in the event of a famine during the war, there would be no protest. That is why at the beginning of 1939 the mobilization potential of the Soviet Union was defined as 20 percent of the total population: we will take all the men from the villages to the war, and the Soviet people will somehow manage without bread. Accustomed to it.

20 percent is the maximum theoretically possible level of mobilization. 20 percent is 34 million potential soldiers and officers.

Obviously, the country could not maintain such an army in peacetime. And in wartime it was impossible to maintain such an army, and it was not needed. It was decided to have a miniature army of only 10-12 million soldiers and officers during the war. But to use it intensively, immediately replacing losses. This approach was called the term "permanent mobilization".

It is said that Soviet divisions, corps and armies were small in size. That is true. But we must remember that there were many of them, and besides, soldiers and officers were not spared, they were used to the limit of human capabilities and beyond those capabilities and were immediately replaced. It's like a bank account: if you have a good source of replenishment, you can spend money easily and freely. There may not be much money at any given moment, but you keep on spending, knowing that tomorrow there will be plenty of money again.

This was the case in Soviet divisions, corps and armies: not many men at the moment, but the commanders used them intensively in the belief that replacements would be sent not tomorrow, but today. The Red Army was relatively small during the war, but it mobilized 29.4 million men during the four years of the war, in addition to the number of men it had on June 22, 1941. (Army General M. Moiseyev. Pravda, July 19, 1991).

And in peacetime the Red Army was tiny: 500-600 thousand men. Stalin invested in the military industry, but kept the number of the army below the one-percent threshold, so as not to burden the economy, not to hamper its growth. And then the Red Army began to grow.

Her headcount amounted to:

1923 - 550,000 1927 - 586,000 1933 - 885,000 1937 - 1,100,000 1938 - 1

513,400 By the beginning of 1939, the Red Army was one percent of the population. This was the Rubicon. Stalin crossed it: by August 19, 1939, the Red Army had reached two million.

Stalin did not stop there. On the contrary, on August 19, he issued a secret order to form dozens of new rifle divisions and hundreds of artillery regiments. The mobilization process was disguised.

The speed of mobilization was increasing. On January 1, 1941, the Red Army numbered 4,207,000 men. In February, the speed of deployment was increased. On June 21, 1941, the Red Army strength was 4,207,000 men.

- 5,500,000 men. This is only the Red Army, in addition to it there were NKVD troops: security, convoy, border, operational. The NKVD had sabotage units and entire formations, the NKVD had its own fleet and aviation.

In peacetime, clearly not expecting a German attack, the Red Army, prior to the official announcement of mobilization, outnumbered the Russian army in wartime after the za-

of mobilization.

If a tiger chases a deer, he will never catch up with it: a deer is lighter and faster than a tiger. If the tiger approaches the deer cautiously, he will never catch up with it: the deer is sensitive to the silence of the forest, all the tiger has to do is to crunch a twig... That is why the tiger uses both methods in combination. The tiger's attack is clearly divided into two stages: first he sneaks around for a long time, silently, centimeter by centimeter, followed by a short, fierce dash.

This was the plan to mobilize the Red Army and the entire Soviet Union for World War II. First, cautiously, sneakily, increase the army to five million. Then rush in.

Five million is enough for a sudden crushing blow, and the rest will follow. That is why during the period of secret mobilization in the Soviet Union the systems of government, state and military communications, the state apparatus, the ideological machine, the NKVD and concentration camps, the Komsomol, industry and transport were converted to wartime mode, the command staff and specialists were trained for an army of more than ten million people, but the growth of the army itself was artificially restrained.

When the number of the army reached and surpassed 5 million, further advance - sneaking - became impossible. Further, Stalin's animal instinct demanded to rush in.

In every Soviet apartment the communist authorities installed a big black loudspeaker - a dish - and in every street ~ a silver bell. One day these loudspeakers were to shout mobilization - M-Day - to the whole country.

Every Soviet reservist had a bright red "Mobilization Sheet" in his papers, with a big black letter "M" on it and a prescription as to what time and where to be on the day mobilization would be announced. In addition to the "M" Day, millions of reservists were given mobilization slips with the days "M+1", "M+2", and so on. This meant an order to report to the assembly point on the day following the announcement of mobilization, or on the second day, etc.

It must be said that the mobilization mechanism was well-established and worked clearly and without fail, like a guillotine knife falling on someone's unfortunate neck. Every reservist knew that failure to show up at the specified time at the specified place was equal to draft evasion and was punishable by wartime laws up to and including execution on the spot. Some experts are still searching for the reasons for the Great Purge of 1937-1938. The reasons are on the surface - it was preparation for modernization and war.

The author writes about it in detail in book one - "Icebreaker". - Ed.

After 1937, everyone knew that Stalin was not kidding. Hitler thwarted Stalin's mobilization, but even in a critical situation, which no plans and calculations had foreseen, even with Stalin absent at the helm of the state, even with complete misunderstanding of what was happening on all floors of society from the Politburo to the very last lagoon, the mobilization machine worked. During the first seven days of the war, the USSR formed 96 new divisions in addition to the existing ones. (SVE. Vol. 5, p-343). During the first seven days of the war, 5,300,000 soldiers and officers were drafted into the army in addition to the millions who were already marching to the frontiers on June 22.

Air Marshal S.A. Krasovsky describes June 22 in the North Caucasus Military District: as soon as the war was reported, the district immediately began to form the 56th Army. (Life in Aviation. p. 117). The same thing happened in other districts, where one or even several armies were formed at the same time. On June 22, Stalin had thirty-one armies. But Stalin had everything ready for the immediate deployment of twenty-eight more armies, and the deployment began immediately, even without his orders. The 56th Army was one of them.

The mobilization system applied not only to the millions of reservists who were to become soldiers and officers, but also to the millions of people whose professions were considered key in wartime. There were 100,000 doctors in the reserves. (The rear of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. C. 69), and each of them had a "Mobilization Sheet". In addition, hundreds of thousands of medical workers of other professions were subject to mobilization. On June 9, 1941 the Red Army had 149 hospitals with 35,540 beds. On the M+Z0 Day it was planned to deploy only evacuation hospitals for 450 thousand beds. By the way, they were deployed.

"Mobilization sheets" had all employees of the Ministry of Communications, the Ministry of Railways

The M-Day and the three following days, a quarter of a million trucks and 40,000 tractors were to be transferred from the national economy to the Red Army. On M-Day and the three following days, a quarter of a million trucks and more than 40,000 tractors were to be transferred from the national economy to the Red Army.

Combat planning is always conducted without a specific date. The day of the start of an operation is designated by the letter "D" and staff officers plan the activities to be carried out on that day. They then work out the plan for the next day, which is referred to as the "D" day.

"D+1 and the following D+2, etc. In addition, plans are worked out for the preceding D-1 and other preceding days.

This approach allows, on the one hand, to conceal the start date of an operation even from those officers and generals who are planning it. On the other hand, if, for some reason, the start date of the operation is pushed back in any direction, there is no need to change anything in the documents prepared in advance. The plan can be easily overlaid on any date.

Soviet mobilization plans were worked out in the same way. Without knowing the date, planners drew up detailed plans for M-Day, the day the government would announce mobilization, as well as for the days, weeks and months following and preceding it.

We will find many references to M Day even in open Soviet sources. The preparations were titanic and it is impossible to erase all this from our history. But communist historians have come up with a trick. They speak quite openly about the preparations, but they speak as if M-Day were simply the day of the beginning of mobilization: if we are attacked, we will mobilize, increase the army and fight back the aggressor.

And I am writing this book to prove that the secret mobilization began on August 19, 1939 of the year.

Therefore, M-Day is not the beginning of mobilization, but only the moment when the covert mobilization- suddenly it is loudly announced and revealed.

M-Day is not the beginning of mobilization, but only the beginning of its final open phase.

The Communists say that mobilization was planned to begin on M-Day, but I prove that the Red Army already had more than five million soldiers. This is no longer a peacetime army, it is a wartime army. Having deployed such an army, Stalin was forced to bring it into the war in the coming weeks, regardless of Hitler's behavior.

During the secret mobilization, the main emphasis was placed on the development of the most technically sophisticated branches of troops and weapons: tank, airborne, artillery, and aviation. In two years of secret mobilization, the Red Army more than doubled in size, while at the same time the number of tank troops increased eightfold. During the period of secret mobilization, the structures of future divisions, corps and armies were being built, they had command staff, but no soldiers yet. On M-Day they were to be filled with cannon fodder.

By July 1941, all the secret preparatory measures were completed, and then the call to the banners was to sound over the whole country, it remained to do openly what in no case could not be done secretly.

The second main idea of my book is that on M-Day, at the moment of the transition from secret to open mobilization, the Red Army's cadre divisions had no intention at all of standing as a barrier on our borders. It was planned to cover the mobilization (more precisely, the open, final part of it) not by standing on the borders, but by sudden crushing blows. Here are some statements on this subject by leading Soviet military theorists.

A.I. Egorov (later Marshal of the Soviet Union): "This is not a period of passive covering of immobilization, strategic concentration and deployment, but a period of active actions with far-reaching goals... Under the cover of these actions the mobilization and deployment of the main forces will be completed." (Report to the Revolutionary Military Council, April 20, 1932).

E.A. Shilovsky (later Lieutenant General): "Behind the first echelon, which invades the enemy's territory, the land army is deployed, but not on the state border, but on the captured frontiers". ("The Initial Period of the War", "War and Revolution", September-October 1933, p. 7).

S.N. Krasilnikov (later a lieutenant general, professor at the General Staff Academy): "To raise huge masses by general mobilization is a risky business. It is much calmer to draw people into separate army units by small mobilizations... Conduct mobilization in parts, without its official announcement". ("War and Revolution

lution," March-April 1934, p. 35).

V.A. Medikov (later Major General): "The cover army turns from the moment of the decision to move to active operations into an invasion army". (Strategic Deployment. 1935).

Combrig G.S. Isserson: "When this mass enters the battle, the silhouettes of the Second Strategic Echelon of mobilized troops will appear in the depths of the country, followed by the Third, and so on. In the end, as a result of 'permanent mobilization', the one who cannot withstand the mobilization tension and will be without reserves and with a depleted economy will be defeated. (Evolution of Operational Art. 1937, p. 79).

The difference with World War I is that in 1941 there were not peacetime armies on the western borders of the state, as there had been in 1914, but 16 invasion armies, which during two years of secret mobilization had developed into regular peacetime armies. In addition to them, the Second Strategic Echelon was being secretly advanced from the interior of the country and three armies of the NKVD Third Echelon were already being formed.

We are told that not all of Stalin's divisions, corps and armies were fully manned and therefore Stalin could not attack. Whoever says that is not familiar with the theory and practice of the war

"permanent mobilization": The first strategic echelon strikes, the second unloads from the echelons, the third completes its formation, the fourth... It is like a shark's teeth, they grow constantly and in rows, the row that fell out is replaced by a new row and another and another. And in the depths of the mouth, rows of very small teeth are cut and move forward. One could say, of course, that a shark cannot attack until it has grown all its teeth... Stalin, indeed, did not have all divisions, corps, armies fully manned. But that was his diabolical plan. You can't man all the divisions, corps, armies, but that was his diabolical plan.

Of the 10 airborne corps, 5 were fully manned and the rest were just beginning to deploy. Stalin had 29 mechanized corps. Each of them was supposed to have a thousand tanks. But only three corps had a thousand tanks each, four other corps had 800-900 tanks each, nine corps had between 500 and 800 tanks each. The remaining 13 corps had from 100 to 400 tanks each. And historians conclude: since not everything is not fully equipped, it means that Stalin could not attack Hitler in 1941.

And we'll look at the situation from the other side. Yes, Stalin has only 5 airborne corps fully manned, while Hitler has none. And in the rest of the world, none. Five airborne corps are enough for any operation, for dealing Germany a fatal blow. Having started the war with a sudden blow and having declared the M-Day, Stalin could in the coming days and weeks complete 5 more airborne corps and put them into action, while the rest of the world could not dream of such a thing. And if someone decided to prove that Stalin, having 5 airborne corps, could not attack, then it is necessary to extend these arguments to Hitler: not having any such corps, he could not attack at all.

Stalin did not have all the mech corps fully manned. Let's agree that three corps with a thousand tanks each is an awful small number. But Hitler didn't have a single corps. Nor did the rest of the world. And neither Hitler nor anybody else had corps of 800-900 tanks. And no one in the world had 600 tank corps in 1941. Only Stalin had them. Stalin was thinking about the future, preparing landing and mechanized corps for subsequent operations. Those amphibious and mechanized corps, which on June 22 were not fully staffed, can be supplemented, completed; paratroopers, tankers were prepared, parachutes were ready, the military industry was working in wartime mode.

All Hitler had was four tank groups. They could be used in the first strike, but Hitler had nothing in reserve. And Stalin had reserves being prepared.

On the other hand, if Stalin had manned all 10 airborne corps, all 29 mech corps with a thousand tanks each, all 300 rifle divisions down to the last soldier, Stalin would have spooked Hitler, and Hitler would have been forced to launch a preemptive strike. By the way, what Stalin had prepared for the first strikes was enough to scare Hitler away.

Military historians have missed a whole layer of history. Everything I'm talking about

a state secret of the Soviet Union. At the same time, in the 1920s and 1930s, the Soviet political and military leadership developed, first in theory and then in practice, an unprecedented plan to secretly convert the country to a wartime regime, from which plans for surprise crushing strikes followed inextricably and logically. These plans were born in a fierce struggle of opinions of powerful groups, defending their own approach to the problem of conquering the world. The heat of passion was so great that the echoes of the polemics burst out of the back walls of the General Staff onto the pages of the open press and illuminated the extent of the preparations with a glowing light.

Even what was published openly gives an idea of the intentions of Stalin and his heroes. Whole stores of open literature have been preserved on what should be included in the pre-mobilization period, how to conduct secret mobilization, how to launch surprise strikes and how to mobilize the main forces under their cover and put them into battle. The magazine "Mobilization Collection" was published. For anyone interested in this issue, I strongly recommend articles by S.I. Ventsov, books by A.V. Kirpichnikov, E.A. Shilovsky, V.A. Melikov, G.S. Isserson, V.K. Triandafillov, and, finally, Boris Mikhailovich Shaposhnikov's book "The Brain of the Army"

The analysis of the development of state structures, military industry and the Red Army shows that all these discussions and arguments were not empty scholasticism - they were transformed into a coherent theory and then put into practice almost to the very end.

Historians have never explained why Hitler attacked Stalin. They say he needed living space. So says someone who has not read "Mein Kampf", and there we are talking about a distant perspective. In 1941 Hitler had enough territories from Brest in the east to Brest in the west, from Northern Norway to North Africa - it was impossible to develop all this in a few generations. In 1941, Hitler had the British Empire, all of conquered Europe, and potentially the United States against him. In order to hold on to what he had captured, Hitler was forced to prepare to seize Gibraltar and conquer the British Isles without superiority at sea.

Is there nothing else for Hitler to do in such an environment but to expand his living space? All the great Germans warned against war on two fronts. Hitler himself saw the main reason for the defeat in the First World War in the fact that the war had to be fought on two fronts. Hitler himself in the Reichstag assured the deputies that he would not allow a war on two fronts. And he did. Why?

Count von Bismarck warned not only against a two-front war, but also against a one-front war if Russia was on that front. And Hitler attacked. And for some reason none of the historians were interested in the reasons for his behavior. Hitler himself told Count von der Schulenburg:

"I, Count, have no way out."

Refers to a port in northwestern France. - Ed.

Stalin left Hitler no way out. The secret mobilization was so huge that it was difficult not to notice it. Hitler also understood what would happen the moment the secret mobilization was suddenly announced openly....

And now let us imagine ourselves in Stalin's dacha on a warm summer evening, somewhere in 1934. Theoretically, we have decided that we must carry out a secret mobilization lasting two years, and before it we must carry out a pre-mobilization period of six to eight months, and even a little earlier we must carry out the Great Purge. In a word, everything should be started in good time, several years before the main events. When should we start the secret mobilization? In 1935? Or maybe in 1945? If we start earlier, we will devastate and ruin the country, reveal our maps and intentions. If we start later, we'll be too late. What should we do?

And there is only one thing left to do: to set a date for the beginning of the Second World War. On the basis of our set date for the beginning of the war, to carry out the Great Purge, the pre-mobilization period, the secret mobilization, on the M-Day, which we have set in advance, to strike sudden blows and to declare a general open mobilization.

The world's leading professional historians seem not to notice what was happening in the Soviet Union in 1937-1941, so when we read their puffy books, we cannot understand who started the Second World War. It turns out that the war was self-inflicted and no one is to blame for its outbreak.

Gentlemen historians, I recommend that you compare the Soviet theory of mobilization with practice, compare what was said in the Soviet Union in the 20s with what was done in the 30s. Then you will stop saying that the Second World War arose by itself, that no one is to blame for its outbreak, then you will see the real culprit.

Chapter 18 SLAVES UNDER HEAVEN

I must confess that I love pilots. If I hear about a pilot being abused, I have my heart aches.

I. Stalin. "Pravda", January 25, 1938.

Films, books, newspaper smiles have accustomed us to the idea that in the 30s young people were going to flying schools in bulk, that there was no shortage of those who wanted to join. And so it was. At first. And then there weren't as many. And then there were no more. And the situation has developed: on the one hand, more and more people are needed for flight schools, and on the other hand, the number of those willing is decreasing. What to do?

And another problem: the productivity of flight schools is increasing, in 1940 they graduated as many pilots as in all previous years combined, and in 1941 they are scheduled to graduate more than in all previous years combined, including the record-breaking 1940. A pilot is an officer. Let's think about how many apartments must be built to provide pilots-graduates of 1940. And how many would be needed for the graduates of 1941? A pilot is an officer, but one who gets twice as much money as his infantry counterpart of the same age and rank. How much money is needed to maintain pilots of 1940-1941 graduates? Again, the uniform is officer's uniform. A pilot officer is traditionally dressed better than his infantry counterpart. For example, an infantry officer of those times has a buttoned collar, while a pilot has a tie. How many ties should I save? Where is the strawman solution that will solve all the problems?

Comrade Stalin found straw man solutions to any problem. And if there is no solution, there are advisors who will give you a hint. The solution was suggested on December 7, 1940 by the Head of the Main Directorate of the Air Force, Lieutenant-General of Aviation Pavel Rychagov: all those who graduated from flight schools and schools should not be given officer ranks. Consequently, there was no need to build apartments for new pilots, no need to pay big money, and there was no need to dress them in dapper uniforms.

There are exceptions in some countries: a military pilot is a sergeant. But that is where the maternal position and social status of a sergeant is closer to an officer than to a soldier. In our country, an enlisted sergeant is a powerless recruit. He sleeps in the barracks with the soldiers, eats the same porridge, and wears the same kirzov boots. A sergeant is allowed to go on leave like a soldier: once or twice a month for a few hours. Or they may not. There is no point in telling you what a Soviet barracks is like. The Soviet barracks must be experienced.

My personal experience of living in a model barracks was 10 years, from July 1958 to July 1968. An exemplary barracks is a dormitory for two hundred to three hundred people; it is beds in a line and a shining floor; it is rising and leaving in thirty seconds; it is a petty officer yelling non-stop for ten years (the petty officers changed, but the yelling never stopped). The Soviet barracks are delights that one book would not be enough to describe. Life in the barracks is easy, because every soldier is waiting for demobilization. "Dismissal is inevitable, like the collapse of capitalism!" - our soldiers wrote on the walls. It is even easier for a cadet to live in the barracks, because his officer's rank awaits him, and an officer's rank comes with a lot of things.

The head of the Air Force Headquarters, Lieutenant General of Aviation Pavel Rychagov, came through the Soviet barracks himself; he graduated from flight school in 1931. In 1940, Lt. Gen. Pavel Rychagov was 29 years old. In his ears, probably, the shouting of the petty officer has not yet subsided. And here he suggests to Stalin that graduates of flying and technical schools should not be given officer ranks, but after graduation they should be given sergeant ranks and left in the barracks.

Anyone who has not lived in a model barracks cannot appreciate the depth of this atrocity. A Soviet cadet reaches graduation only because there is light at the end of the tunnel. A Soviet cadet goes to graduation like a donkey after a carrot, which is placed on a string in front of his nose as a bait.

he's getting a carrot. However, at the end of the journey he is fed that carrot. But to graduate from an officer's school and not get that carrot at the end of the journey....

Those cadets who were admitted to the schools in 1940 were not so offended: they were taught short programs and were promised nothing from the start. But in 1940, many thousands of cadets were still completing flight schools under the old full three-year programs. And just before graduation, which every cadet dreamed about every night, they received Stalin's surprise: there would be no officer ranks. It's time to shout: "Here's your grandmother's day!". An enthusiast went to an officer's school, gave his youth to the Motherland in exchange for Leutenant kubari, and his mustachioed uncle announces to him at graduation: there will be no kubari!

In the memoirs of Soviet pilots we often encounter this situation: "Young recruits arrived. They were pilots who had graduated from normal military aviation schools with a three-year training period, but who received the military rank of "sergeant" upon graduation. (Air Force Lieutenant-General L.V. Zholudev. Steel Squadron. P. 41).

Major General of Aviation V.A. Kuznetsov was among those who were promoted from the officer's school as sergeants. At the beginning of the war, he joined a regiment that was being formed in the rear, and the pilots who had been previously graduated as lieutenants and those who were graduated a little later as sergeants met. "The huge barracks is uncomfortable. There are two tiers of iron soldiers' bunks... The barracks is very cramped... The sergeants look with admiration and undisguised envy at the cherry cubes and beautiful, well-made uniforms...".

And then the formation. Appear regimental commander Nikolaev and commissar Shvedov.

"The colonel took a few steps, stopped, looked with some amazement at the formation, then at Shvedov, and, pointing in our direction with his hand, asked: "Who is this?"

Shvedov answered something. Nikolaev silently turned and walked towards the headquarters. The commissar headed after him as well. "Fledglings!" - came to us already from afar..." The commissar returned; "- The regimental commander is dissatisfied with the balance in the formation and appearance. Skinny some...". (Silver Wings. P. 3-6).

The pilots are clearly not falcons. Underfed hatchery roosters.

If we call things by their names, then in relation to tens of thousands of young pilots Stalin and Rychagov applied the technique of petty cheats: explained to beginners the rules of the game, played for a long time, and then at the end of the game announced that the rules have changed ...

But let's leave the moral question. The legal question is: on what grounds should we keep pilot-sergeants in the Red Army? Graduates of 1940-1941 came voluntarily to aviation colleges and schools in 1937-1938, when there was no universal military duty. Until September 1939, only some were drafted into the army, aviation and navy. The term of service in aviation was 2 years. In 1937-1938 young men voluntarily chose 3 hard labor cadet years instead of two non-compulsory years of soldiering.

On September 1, 1939, universal military duty was introduced and the terms of service were extended: they began to serve in aviation for three years instead of two. The cadet years counted as active military service - give them officer ranks and keep them in aviation until their retirement or let them go home: they had served three years in the barracks. The law says no more. There is no reason to keep them in military aviation, and even in a custodial status, i.e. in the position of slaves in cages.

But Rychagov came up with the idea. Stalin approved it. New law: the term of compulsory service in aviation to increase to 4 years. The Supreme Soviet voted unanimously, and no more problems: the term of service in aviation is 4 years, and you have served only three. One more year, dear comrades.

Another year. And then?

There are heaps of monographs and dissertations written about the war, but in none of them do we find an answer to the question of what Stalin intended to do with the herds of pilots when the year was up. Not only is there no answer to this question, but no one has even posed it. But it is an interesting question. By a clever piece of legislation, tens of thousands of pilots were left in barracks until the fall of 1941. In 1941, Hitler attacked and removed the question. But Stalin did not expect Hitler's attack and did not believe in it. What did Stalin plan to do with herds of pilots after the fall of 1941?

You can't give them officer ranks. Stalin and without them almost 600 thousand officers, not counting the NKVD. In addition, in 1941, military schools and courses are preparing to graduate 233 thousand new officers, mainly for infantry, artillery and tank troops, if also pilots

to give officer ranks, then together with the NKVD, Stalin will have a million officers. Stalin will have almost as many officers as Tsar Nicholas had soldiers. Ruin. So it is impossible to give officer ranks to graduates of flight schools and schools for economic reasons.

And Stalin had no such plan: we can find no indication that the construction of apartments for such a large number of pilots was planned or started, no trace of orders for the mass production of officer uniforms for an astronomical number of pilots, no billions in the budget to be paid to graduate pilots in case of their promotion to officers.

So what to do with them in the fall of 1941? Let them go home? It would be too expensive: three years of training, billions of dollars, millions of tons of first-class gasoline burned, many planes with cadets and instructors threatened, and now to let them go? In a few months, the pilots will lose their skills and all the efforts will be for naught.

Or maybe we should issue another law and keep them in barracks for the fifth year and the sixth and the seventh, like slaves on the galleys, chained to the oars, i.e. to airplanes? It's a good option, but it won't work. A pilot must fly all the time. Let's estimate how many training planes are needed for such a lot of pilots, how many instructors, how much gasoline to burn every year.

And there was only one way out for Stalin: to start the war BEFORE the fall of 1941.

Stalin's plan was simple: let them enter the war as sergeants, some will survive, here they will become officers, they will become aviation generals and marshals. And the majority will lie down as sergeants. You don't have to pay money to the family for a sergeant killed. It's an economy.

Training pilots in such numbers is mobilization. Total mobilization. If we start mobilization, we will come to economic collapse or war. Stalin understood this better than anyone. Economic collapse was not in his plans.

And now let's look at this situation through the eyes of a young guy who was graduated in the fall of 1940 as a sergeant. He was not allowed to go on vacation after graduation, he was not given any money, his uniform was soldier's, he lives in a barracks, sleeps on a soldier's bed, chews soldier's porridge, wears kirzov boots (leather boots from the warehouse were ordered to be loaded into wagons, sent to the western borders and dumped in the ground there). Our sergeant is not discouraged. He can fly in kirzov boots as well.

Another thing disturbed him: he had chosen a profession for the rest of his life, decided to become an officer-pilot, trumpeted three years in the school, an extra year was introduced, it would end in the fall of 1941, and then what? His friends, with whom he studied at school, got professions in four years, got on their feet, some of them worked as NKVD investigators, sharpening the teeth of enemies of the people with a file, some of them became engineers at a tank factory, and he remained a fool. He studied for three years, served a year and was left with nothing. Why did he fly? Why risk his life? Why did he spend nights memorizing formulas? He decided to give his life to aviation, and it would have been good if then, in 1937, he had been rejected, but he was accepted, he spent four years in the army, and now in the fall of 1941 he will be kicked out of the aviation and the army. Who would need his profession of a bomber pilot? To go to the civil aviation? There's nowhere to put their own.

So let's think whether a sergeant-graduate will advise his younger brother on the aviation profession. Without advice, it is clear: there is no reason to go to aviation schools, those schools do not give anything, you fly, fly, and in the end it is unclear what you get.

After all this, what kind of a fool would go to flight school? Who needs to study at an officer's school and still be a soldier? Who needs to study and have total uncertainty at the end? And Stalin and Rychagov go further. Not only a pilot is now a sergeant, but also a senior pilot is a sergeant, a squadron commander is a sergeant, and a deputy squadron commander is a sergeant. So many aviation squadrons and regiments have been deployed that the country is able to give officer privileges only to squadron commanders and above. And all pilots and squadron commanders and even deputy squadron commanders from the spring of 1941 - to the barracks position. Under the shout of a petty officer.

So after all this, who would voluntarily go to flight school? Who needs that kind of romance?

Comrades Stalin and Rychagov also foresaw this. And so the order of December 7, 1940 provided not only the release of pilots sergeants, but also the abandonment of the voluntary principle of staffing flight schools. This has never happened in the history of world aviation. I hope not in the history of world aviation.

Seconded.

On December 7, 1940, the principle of compulsory staffing of flight schools was introduced in the Soviet Union. THIS IS WAR.

No other country in the world has decided to take such a step even during a war. People everywhere fly voluntarily.

The introduction of the principle of compulsory enrollment in flight schools is not just a war, but a general and aggressive war. If in a defensive war we force a man to fly, it will not end well, in the sky he is a free bird - he will fly to the enemy, in captivity no one will force him to fly.

It is possible to use captive pilots only in a victorious, offensive war, when we have made a sudden strike on the enemy's airfields and tank wedges are cutting the enemy's land. In this situation there is no point in a captive pilot fleeing: in a few days you will fall into the clutches of the NKVD anyway.

This is a good time to ask, can a captive pilot be taught to fly if he does not want to? Is it possible to teach aerobatics to a captive pilot in the three to four months that Stalin and Rychagov took for training in December 1940? You can't.

But they didn't need aerobatics. They weren't trained for defensive warfare. They were not trained to repel aggression and conduct aerial combat. They were trained for the Ivanov airplane, specially designed for such an occasion. They were prepared for the following situation: take off at daylight, follow the leader in a tight group, at his command drop bombs on "sleeping" aerodromes, turn around smoothly and return.

Even a slave could be taught this in three to four months, especially since the Su-2 Ivanov was designed for such pilots. And if someone crashes into a tree during landing, no problem: Comrade Stalin had plenty of sergeant pilots. And aircraft "Ivanov" Soviet industry was preparing to give plenty. So they decided to do without aerobatics and without aerial combat.

It was then that Lieutenant General Pavel Rychagov's slogan, with which he went down in history, was sounded: "Let's not figure!"

Chapter 19 ABOUT PASHA ANGELINA AND THE LABOR RESERVES.

Mobilization readiness is needed not only for military plants, but for the whole industry: in wartime the whole industry will be military.
Stalin, 1940.

Pasha Angelina was known by the whole country. Pasha Angelina smiled from the front pages of newspapers and magazines. No, she is not an actress. Pasha Angelina is the country's first female tractor driver and the leader of the first female tractor brigade. She was famous not only for her hard work, but also for her wisdom. Journalists followed her tractor in droves, and more than once her thoughts became catchy headlines on the front pages of central newspapers: "We must work better!", "We must work better!", "We must work better!", "We must work better!", etc.

But the real fame came to Pasha Angelina on the eve of the war, when a nomenklatura tractor driver threw a new slogan to the masses: "One hundred thousand girlfriends - on a tractor!". I don't know whether Pasha came up with it herself or someone suggested it, but the Soviet press picked it up, amplified it many times, and the call rang out over the country from high and low tribunes, from newspaper pages, from millions of re-producers. The cry was heard, and in a short time not one hundred, but TWENTY thousand women tractor drivers were trained in the Soviet Union. (The Great Patriotic War. Encyclopedia. p. 49).

Here I must emphasize that we are talking about peaceful tractors that plow the vast fields of our boundless Motherland: may our great Motherland blossom in the spring, may tractors, obedient to the tender hands of women, rumble peacefully in its fertile fields.

Now let us think of men. If "two hundred thousand girlfriends" have confidently taken their places behind the levers of agricultural tractors, displacing two hundred thousand male tractor drivers, what are poor men to do?

Don't worry about the men. The General Staff was worried about the men. It so happened (pure chance, of course) that Pasha Angelina's call for women coincided exactly with the beginning of the secret mobilization of the Red Army, which at that moment badly needed a hundred thousand and then another hundred thousand experienced male tractor drivers for tanks, artillery tractors, and heavy engineering vehicles. The "liberation campaigns" conducted by the Red Army in 1939-1940 were not only the creation of convenient bridgeheads for the seizure of Europe, they were not only the testing of theories and plans "in an environment as close to combat as possible", "liberation campaigns" and small wars.

- is a cover for a big mobilization. Today, for example, we are "liberating" Poland - three tractor drivers in that Soviet village and five in this one. There was even such a movie - "Tractor drivers", with a demonstration of the offensive power of BT-7 tanks.

The "campaign" ends victoriously, but the tractor drivers do not return to their villages, they remain in the Red Army. Instead of them, others will sit at the levers of agricultural tractors. And tomorrow we will "liberate" Finland - again a dozen tractor drivers are taken there, and here - a dozen, and in their place - caring girlfriends. That's how slowly, imperceptibly "two hundred thousand friends" were harnessed to the yoke of peaceful labor, freeing strong, experienced male tractor drivers for more important things....

And Pasha Angelina found imitators. And now the astonished world learns about the first all-female steam locomotive brigade. It turned out that a Soviet woman could throw coal into the steam furnace as well as a man. Soviet women did not make a mess of things at peat mining. It turned out that during the construction of railroads (which were pulled to the western borders for some unknown reason) a Soviet woman could carry not only sleepers, but also rails. True, they were harnessed to one rail by the dozens. But nothing! They're pulling!

Colonel General of Engineering and Artillery Service B.L. Vannikov (at that time People's Commissar of Defense Industry of the USSR, a member of the Central Committee of the Party) testifies: "By the beginning of 1940, women made up 41 percent of all workers and employees in industry. They quickly mastered production in the most critical and complex areas, and in many operations acted even more deftly than men." ("Questions of History", 1969, N 1, p. 128).

The same thing was repeated by Marshal of the Soviet Union D.F. Ustinov in his book "In the Name of Disaster" (p. 107), and by Marshal of the Soviet Union S.K. Kurkotkin in his book "The Back of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War" (p. 23). And I wondered why the big bosses were talking about the beginning of 1940?

It would be more interesting about early 1941, or better yet, mid-1941.

But they're not talking about it. The process was escalating. And if we publish the figures at the time of the German attack, the question will inevitably arise: what were the Soviet men doing, where did they go?

But how far can you go on women and their enthusiasm alone? Isn't it time for Comrade Stalin to harness the teenagers as well? It's time.

In Soviet museums, you will be shown wartime pictures of a puny boy operating a huge machine. Sharpening gun shells. He's exceeding the norm. And two shell boxes are carefully placed under his feet so that his hands could reach the levers. Oh, what enthusiasm! Oh, what patriotism!

But a museum won't tell you that teenagers were driven to war factories by the hundreds of thousands and millions forcibly BEFORE Hitler attacked.

Let's open the newspaper Pravda for October 3, 1940 and on the first page read an amazing report about the introduction of tuition fees in high schools of ordinary schools and in 1940: the complete mobilization and militarization of Soviet industry. Aircraft, tank, gun, and shell factories have gone into wartime mode, men are secretly taken into the army, weapons are produced by old men, women, and teenagers.

Soviet industry was producing so many shells that there was nowhere to store them, so it was necessary to start the war in 1941... higher educational institutions. Motivation: "taking into account the increased welfare of the workers." Prices are toothsome. So much for workers' and peasants' power!

The meaning of the introduction of school fees becomes clear if you read the decree "On the State Labor Reserves of the USSR" on the same page.

According to the decree, a General Directorate of "labor reserves" is to be established in the USSR. It controls initially 1,551 "educational institutions" and reports directly to the head of the government, i.e. Molotov, and from May 1941 to Stalin personally.

The number of "educational institutions" is planned to increase. Recruitment to "educational institutions" is compulsory, like mobilization to the army. The age is 14 years. Training is "combined with the fulfillment of production standards".

Escape from the "labor reserves" entails a full term in romantic places for youth. The rules in the "labor reserves" are military-prison-like. The term of training is up to two years, production norms are almost the same as for adults. However, for the period of training, the state provides the students with "free food and uniforms". This is presented as a pro- manifestation of the Party's and government's concern for the younger generation. I had tears of sympathy in my eyes, but then I remembered that our native state provides free food and uniforms in prisons as well. Comrade Stalin was very thoughtful.

Kremlin historians are full of nostalgia for those glorious times: "The mobilization form of attracting young men and women to study in the system was of special importance. "labor reserves" as opposed to the principle of voluntary admission." (The Great Patriotic War. Encyclopedia. P. 729). Ah, how beautiful is forced labor!

With what will the young proletarian pay for such a touching care of the Motherland? The decree also provided for this: after graduation, the worker was obliged to work for four years at the factory, without having the right to choose the place, profession and working conditions.

Already the first mobilization into the "labor reserves" gave a millionth catch, and further on the count went on millions.

The forced mobilization of teenagers into industry meant the MOBILIZATION OF INDUSTRY, putting it under wartime regime and subjecting it to wartime laws. In October 1940, the Barbarossa plan had not yet been signed. Hitler has not yet decided to go to war against Stalin. But Stalin did.

The decree on the introduction of tuition fees in schools and higher educational institutions was intended to drive more young people into the streets. The highest prices were set in educational institutions that trained musicians, actors, and artists who were not needed in the war. Prices drove pupils and students out of the classrooms, and the "labor reserves" absorbed the youth through the voracious gates of the war factories.

The introduction of the "labor reserve" system is not just preparation for a big war. It is preparation for a great war of liberation on enemy territory.

The "labor reserves" were used in the aviation, artillery, tank industries and many other sectors. Here is one example of how the Soviet leadership intended to dispose of teenagers mobilized for railway transport in the event of war. We already know that Soviet railroad troops before the war were prepared not to destroy their own railroads in the course of defensive operations, but to rebuild the enemy's railroads after the advancing Red Army units and rebuild them to the broad Soviet standard.

Marshal of the Soviet Union S. K. Kurkotkin testifies that according to the calculation of the Soviet command (they had everything calculated!) simultaneous restoration of 19 western railroad directions required intensive labor 257 thousand Soviet soldiers-railroaders. The Soviet command decided to allocate only 170 thousand soldiers for this work, and the shortfall of 87 thousand to make up for the work of special detachments of "labor re-services" numbering 100 thousand people. (The rear of the Soviet Armed Forces in the Great Patriotic War. p. 52). A good idea.

Hitler's attack prevented the implementation of these good ideas of the Soviet marshals. The railroads in the "liberated" territories did not have to be rebuilt in 1941.

Chapter 20

ON THE CONQUESTS OF OCTOBER

Closer to the war, the working day was lengthened to 10 hours, and from the spring of 1941 to 12.

G.Ozerov. "Tupolev's Charaga" p.44.

The Communists came to power under beautiful slogans. As early as October 1905, in the newspaper They published the program of their party in "New Life". Among many other points: a short working day with a complete prohibition of overtime work, prohibition of night work, prohibition of child labor (up to 16 years of age), prohibition of female labor in those industries where it is harmful to the female body, and the introduction of two days off per week. It is clear that two separate days off per week were not recognized as a full-fledged rest: it was necessary to have two days together.

And much more was written there, but the essence of the program (and all other communist programs) can be expressed in one slogan: we will work less and less, and get more and more. The slogan is attractive. Millions of fools liked the slogan, and in October 1917 the Communists took power, which was accompanied by joyful cries of those who wanted to work less.

The communist power did not give up its promises, but good communist power must be kept, it must be defended against enemies external and internal, and for this purpose it needs a lot of weapons. Consequently, the people must work harder than before, otherwise the capitalists will come back and exploit the working masses again.

In order to protect good power, the communists introduced draconian orders at the factories: every worker is a soldier of the labor army, die, but fulfill an impossible norm, or the capitalists will return....

"Is it true," Lev Trotsky asked at the Third All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions in April 1920, "that forced labor is always productive? My answer is that this is the most pathetic and most vulgar prejudice of liberalism." And Trotsky began to form labor armies according to the most atrocious recommendations that Marx had laid down in the "Manifesto of the Communist Party." Marx believed in slave labor (let us read the "Manifesto" again), and Trotsky believed.

Slave labor produced results while the country was at war. But the Civil War ended, and in peaceful conditions slave labor was not productive. The country was hit by an unprecedented crisis, and factories closed and there was no work. The Communists fought unemployment, shortening the working day and the working week, turning everyone into semi-unemployed with a corresponding salary. Instead of a seven-day week, they introduced a five-day week - we work four days and rest the fifth. The result was not 52 weeks, but 73 weeks a year with a corresponding number of days off.

They also introduced a whole bunch of holidays, like Paris Commune Day. You can think of a lot of holidays if you want. And the working day became shorter, to the amazement of the whole world. This was declared to be the conquests of the working class, the conquests of October.

And then the working day began to stretch a little. The country spun, the country spun. Five-year plans rattled and rattled. Construction sites soared into the sky: Dneproges, Magnitka, Komsomolsk. True, the paycheck, or rather its purchasing power, remained frozen at the level of a half-unemployed person's allowance. People worked more and more, but the standard of living did not grow, although Comrade Stalin announced that life had become better and life had become more fun. Everything created by the people went into the bottomless barrel of the military-industrial complex and was absorbed by the Red Army.

For example, the Dnieper hydroelectric power plant was built, and an aluminum smelter was built nearby. The American researcher Anthony Sutton, who collected material on the transfer of Western technology to Stalin, provides information that the Zaporozhye aluminum smelter was the most powerful and the most temporary in the world (A.S. Sutton. National Suicide: Military aid to the Soviet Union. Arlington house. N.Y. p. 174). Electricity from the Dnieper Power Plant was used for the production of aluminum, aluminum was used for aircraft factories, and aircraft factories are known for their products.

And it's the same with Magnitogorsk: we build blast furnaces, open-hearth furnaces, cook steel, produce the most tanks in the world, but the standard of living cannot improve.

Or Komsomolsk. Polar Komsomol members in the taiga are heroically building a marvelous city. Why? Because the most powerful aviation plant in the world is being built here with free labor and the supply of everything necessary from America.

And the flywheel was gaining momentum. And we had to work harder and harder. It's been five years now.

The daily working week was turned into a six-day week, and the working day was brought up to world standards, and a little higher. And the number of holidays was cut back: of course, we should celebrate Lenin's death day, but in our spare time.

And then came 1939, followed by 1940. And it became somehow unseemly to remember the "wars of October", the promises of the Communist Party, its slogans.

In 1939 the collective farms introduced compulsory production norms: collective farming is voluntary, but if you don't fulfill the norm, we'll put you in jail.

On May 27, 1940, the SNK decreed "On Increasing the Role of the Foreman at Heavy Engineering Plants". To put it mildly, it was a harsh decree. The foreman at the plant was endowed with no less rights than a company petty officer. When you read the decree, instead of Uncle Vasya, a foreman in iron glasses, in an oiled smock, with a kettle in his left pocket, you imagine an overseer with a whip at the construction of an Egyptian pyramid or with a bamboo stick at the construction of the Great Wall.

On June 26, 1940, the decree "On the transition to an eight-hour working day, a seven-day work week and the prohibition of unauthorized departure of workers and employees from enterprises and institutions" rang out over the country. If you like the master with a bamboo stick, you can't leave the factory. In what job you found the decree, stay in that job. You can't pay off the factory and leave. Workers are assigned to the factory like rowers on galleys are chained to oars, like peasants from the Soviet Union to the collective farm, like pilots with inexperienced skills to airplanes. Was it worth it to put Sovereign Nicholas Alexandrovich and his heir against the wall to be assigned to a factory together with machine tools and production lines? One can talk at length about the horrors of autocracy, but there was no such thing under Nicholas.

The decree of June 2, 1940 already in its title contradicted not only the rules generally accepted in the world, but also the Stalinist Constitution of 1936, and in many points at once. The Stalinist Constitution, for example, guaranteed a seven-hour working day.

And on the same day - the decree of the SNK "On Increasing Production and Reducing Workloads". Nock."

July 10, 1940 another decree: "On responsibility for the release of poor-quality pro- The NKVD comrades will help if a craftsman can't handle a bamboo stick. If the master cannot cope with a bamboo stick, the comrades from the NKVD will help. By the way, the decree was also against the master: if he did not properly monitor the quality of the products, he would first of all be sent to a guarded place.

And the decrees come in succession. August 10, 1940: "On criminal liability for petty theft at work" - camp terms for a screwdriver, for a nut carried away in a pocket.

On October 19, 1940, another decree: "On the order of compulsory transfer of engineers, technicians, foremen, employees and skilled workers from one enterprise and institution to another". You cannot transfer yourself from one job to another, but shell, cannon, tank, and aircraft factories are growing, and they are staffed with labor in a planned centralized order: you, you, you and these ten, pack your bags, tomorrow you will go wherever you are ordered... This is already Trotskyism. Trotsky dreamed of everyone being "a soldier of labor, who cannot dispose of himself freely; if an order is given to move him, he must fulfill it; if he does not fulfill it, he will be a deserter who is punished." (Speech at the IX Party Congress).

Each decree of 1940 was generous with terms, especially for truant workers. According to the decree of June 26, absenteeism was punishable by imprisonment, and absenteeism was defined as being more than 20 minutes late for work. The streetcar broke down, late for work, and latecomers were sent to camps: they would not be allowed to be late there.

Many times I have heard communist professors discussing: was Stalin not a paranoid? There is evidence of his mental illness: he imprisoned communists and shot executioners (e.g., Tukhachevsky and Yakir).....

No, Comrade Communists, Stalin was not paranoid. The Great Planting was necessary in order to follow them to introduce the decrees of 1940, and that no one would not squeak. This year's decrees are the final transfer of the country's economy to wartime mode. This is mobilization.

The labor legislation of 1940 was so perfect that it was neither amended nor supplemented during the war.

And the working day grew longer and longer: the nine-hour day turned into a ten-hour day, then into an eleven-hour day. And overtime work was allowed: if you wanted to work, you had to stay on the job.

You're going to be here tonight. The government prints money, distributes it to those who like to work overtime, and then pumps that money back out of the population with defense loans. And the people are short of money again. Then the government meets the people's needs: you can work without days off. For the people. Later, however, it was introduced for everyone - to work without days off.

Leonid Brezhnev was at that time the secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk regional committee for defense industry: "The factories that produced purely peaceful products were switching to military rails... We did not know the weekends". (Malaya Zemlya. p. 16). If Brezhnev did not know weekends, did those he commanded have weekends?

And this was not the case in Dnepropetrovsk alone. After the war, V.I. Kuznetsov became an academician, one of the leading Soviet rocket designers, S.P. Korolev's deputy. Before the war he was also a designer, but of a lower rank. And the task was set: to develop a new artillery fire control device. Work for many years. The order was to do it in three months. "We worked late, no weekends, no vacations. When we left the territory, we handed in a passport and received a passport in return. One day he was turned away at the gate:

- Here you are, Kuznetsov, food coupons, here is the key to the room, there are tables and a bunk. Until you do, you'll live at the factory.....

The three months of "imprisonment" flew by in one long day. The devices were taken out of the plant at night. ("Krasnaya Zvezda", January 7, 1989).

In the article about Kuznetsov, the word "imprisonment" is taken in quotation marks. It is clear: no trial, no investigation, no charges - he was simply ordered to work day and night for three months, so he did. But Kuznetsov's future boss and the creator of the first satellite, S.P. Korolev, was in those glorious times. And many with him.

And here again you begin to understand the meaning of the Great Stalinist purge. Stalin needed the best airplanes, the best tanks, the best guns in Stakhanov time, but without spending a lot of money on development. And so the designers are sitting in prisons, in charades; if you give us the world's best dive bomber, the best tank, the best cannon, we will release them. The designers work not for Stalin's prizes, not for dachas on Crimean shores, not for caviar and champagne, but for their own heads: no airplane, they will be sent to Kolyma.

The design bureaus of Tupolev, Petlyakov and many others sat in full and created behind prison bars: reliable, cheap, fast, and secrets would not escape. Tupolev's deputy G. Ozerov recalls: "Volnyag" transferred to a mandatory ten-hour workday, most Sundays they also work ... The people are maturing confidence in the inevitable war, people understand it in their gut ..." (Tupolev's Charaga. p. 99).

And then they brought the working day up to 12 hours. You can work even longer in a sharag with proper food and warmth. And at a lumberyard? The magazine "Novoe Vremya" reports: "Since January 1, 1941, the food standards for prisoners were reduced. Why? Perhaps, this affected the preparation for future battles...?" (1991, N 32. p. 31). Exactly so - preparation for future battles.

Admiral of the Soviet Union Fleet N.G. Kuznetsov proudly reports: "Essentially unlimited funds were allocated for the needs of defense". (On the Eve. p. 270). The word "defense" here should have been put in quotation marks, but otherwise it is correct. And because funds were allocated for the needs of the war without restrictions, it was necessary to introduce restrictions somewhere, to save money on something.

They saved on convicts, on the working class, on the labor intelligentsia, on the collective farm peasantry.

But even at the top, heads were flying. We will find echoes of the great battle in the press of that time. The magazine "Problems of Economics" for October 1940: "The representative of the dictatorship of the working class, the Soviet director of an enterprise, has all the fullness of power. His word is law, his power in production must be dictatorial... The Soviet economic officer has no right to evade the use of the sharpest weapon - the power which the Party and the State have entrusted to him. A production commander who refrains from applying the most brutal measures to violators of state discipline discredits himself in the eyes of the working class as a man who does not justify his trust".

And it turned out that the foreman was a dictator over the workers. And the superior is a dictator over the foreman, and so on up to the director, who is a dictator at the factory. And above him, too, a horde of dictators. And how consonant is everything that is said about the director-dictator with the disciplinary statute of 1940: in order to make the subordinates obey, the commander has the right and obligation to use

all means, up to and including arms. If he uses weapons against his subordinates, he is not responsible for the consequences, and if he does not use them, then he himself will be court-martialed. And directors were put in the same conditions: either bite everyone, or lie down in the mud, and a new director would be put in your place.

And "Pravda" spurs on - August 18, 1940: "148 absenteeism cases were discovered in Leningrad factories, but only 78 cases were referred to the court". Some directors show softness. Let us be sure that after this publication, not only those whom the proletarian newspaper had mentioned, not only the directors who had shown leniency, but also those who had not put the directors in jail before the publication, sat down "Pravda."

Khrushchev once declared that Stalin led the war by globe, that is, he did not go into details, but set global objectives.

Apart from Khrushchev, no one has ever said such nonsense. Hundreds of people who knew Stalin intimately say otherwise.

Stalin knew thousands (perhaps tens of thousands) of names. Stalin knew all the top commanders of the NKVD, knew all his generals. Stalin knew personally armament designers, directors of major factories, concentration camp chiefs, secretaries of regional committees, NKVD and NKGB investigators, hundreds: thousands of Chekists, diplomats, leaders of the Komsomol, trade unions, etc., etc., etc. Stalin never once made a mistake in 30 years in naming an official. Stalin knew the characteristics of many weapons, especially experimental ones. Stalin knew the number of weapons produced in the country. Stalin's notebook became as famous as Alexander the Great's horse. It contained everything about the country's arms production.

From November 1940, the directors of aircraft factories had to personally report to the Central Committee every day on the number of airplanes produced. From December, this rule was extended to the directors of tank, artillery and shell factories.

But Stalin pressed personally. He had such a technique: he wrote in his own hand on behalf of directors and People's Commissars a written commitment and let them sign it... If you don't sign, you will be removed from office with appropriate consequences. If you signed it and did not fulfill it...

Colonel General A. Shakhurin was People's Commissar of Aviation Industry at that time. Shakhurin's predecessor, M. Kaganovich, was removed and shot himself without waiting for the consequences of his removal. Shakhurin took over Kaganovich's post. And here he dines with Stalin. January 1941. Stalin's lunch is a very late dinner. Servants set the table, put all the dishes and do not enter the room again. The conversation is business. About the release of airplanes. Schedules for the release of airplanes approved. Shakhurin knows that the aviation industry will produce the planned number of the latest aircraft. That's why he's calm. But Stalin is not enough what is planned for production and what he himself approved. He needs more. And then:

"Stalin, taking a sheet of paper, began to write: "Obligation (title underlined). We, Shakhurin, Dementiev, Voronin, Balandin, Kuznetsov, Khrunichev (my deputies), hereby undertake to bring the daily output of new combat aircraft in June 1941 to 50 aircraft per day." "Can you," he said, "sign such a document?" "You wrote more than one of my surnames," I answered, "and it is right, we have a large team working for us. Let me discuss it and give you an answer tomorrow." "Very well," said Stalin. The commitment was taken by us and fulfilled. Stalin was daily engaged in our work, and not a single breakdown in the schedule passed him by." ("Questions of History", 1974, N 2. p. 95).

Stalin made the noose, and the leaders of the aviation industry had to put the noose around their necks themselves.

The commitment was signed by the Commissar and his deputies; now we can imagine how they will use their dictatorial powers against the directors of aircraft plants. And the directors will use their dictatorial powers against the shop and production managers. And they... And so on all the way to the foreman in the oily coat. By the way, at least one of Stalin's list - Vasily Petrovich Balandin, Deputy Commissar for Engines - went to jail in early June 1941. Beautiful Russian language - zekek Balandin. His accomplices were shot. Balandin was lucky: in July he was released. Aircraft designer Yakovlev describes his return: "Vasily Petrovich Balandin, gaunt, shaved naked, has already taken his office in the People's Commissariat and continued to work as if nothing had happened to him ..." (The Purpose of Life. P. 227).

It remains for us to find out when the mobilization race in industry began and what the

could have ended.

It is clear that decisions were made in the bowels of Stalin's dachas. But the decisions taken in secret were announced, albeit not fully, albeit allegorically. The decisions made were implemented by the whole country, in full view of the whole world. It's like in the army: a soldier does not know what and when the bosses decided, but he has to dig the trench. And it does not matter at all who made the decision, it will be communicated to the soldier and its implementation will be checked. And if we do not know what and when Stalin made decisions, we can see their fulfillment. The decisions always came ostensibly not from Stalin, but from the delegates of the Party Congress, from the Supreme Soviet, from the representatives of the workers. (The decree of June 26, 1940 was also adopted "on the initiative of trade unions"). And the Commissars wrote commitments in their own names: "We, Shakhurin, Dementyev, Voronin, Balandin...". However, they were written in Stalin's handwriting, but signed by their own hand.

The precursor to the mobilization of industry for the needs of the war was the XVIII Congress of the Party. And do not think that Stalin spoke at the Congress and said that we should work 10-12 hours. Not at all. Stalin did not like such words. Stalin's style of public speaking: "Life has become better, comrades. Life has become more cheerful." ("Pravda", November 22, 1935).

And the then unknown Vyacheslav Malyshev spoke at the XVIII Congress. His speech of March 19, 1939 should be read. It is a masterpiece. According to the tradition of that time, Pravda did not specify the positions of the speakers at the congress or even their initials; "Speech of Vol. Malyshev," and not a word more. Not everyone in the hall knew who this goose was. And this is the nominee on the rise. A ferocious Stalinist tiger. He's 36. A year ago he became director of the plant, a month ago - People's Commissar of Heavy Machine Building. A year later he'll become Molotov's deputy, in May 1941 - Stalin's deputy.

Becoming Stalin's deputy is not easy. Malyshev became one at the age of 38. Not only that, but he held the post until Stalin's death and then remained deputy head of the Soviet government almost until his death. In addition to the post of Stalin's deputy, Malyshev would spend the entire war as People's Commissar of the tank industry, receiving the military rank of Colonel-General and the unofficial titles of "Commander-in-Chief of the Tank Industry",

"Prince Tankogradsky", etc. Malyshev is the Zhukov of Soviet industry. Soviet tanks ended the war in Berlin. Malyshev's merit in this is in no way less than Zhukov's merit.

Knowing today how Malyshev's career developed during the war and after it, we should read once again the "Speech of t. Malyshev" of March 19, 1939, and it is in this speech that we should look for clues to the question of the beginning of the pre-mobilization period in Soviet industry. Malyshev said exactly what had to be said at the beginning of 1939. He not only said, but also did exactly what Stalin demanded. Otherwise, Malyshev would not have become Stalin's deputy.

And then - as a harbinger of forthcoming decrees - on August 24, 1939, the same Malyshev's article "On Personnel Turnover and Labor Force Reserves" appeared in Izvestiya. Malyshev's article already contained everything that a year later would be poured into the chiseled lines of Stalin's decrees on the emancipation of the labor force, on "labor reserves" and on the actual transformation of industry into a single mechanism working for the war.

It is an amazing coincidence: on August 23, 1939, they signed a pact with Hitler, and the next day an article announcing it appears. It seems: first the pact with Hitler was signed on August 23, and the next day an article calling for sharpening axes appeared. But the events developed in the opposite order: first they decided to sharpen axes, and then they signed the pact with Hitler. The article appeared on August 24, but it was typed on August 23. Malyshev had written it earlier, that is, before the pact was signed.

When the Kremlin was shaking hands with Ribbentrop and drinking to Hitler's health, the draconian decrees of 1940 were already a foregone conclusion. I do not rule out that it was Malyshev who initiated them, for which reason he was elevated to the post of deputy head of the government for industry, beating all his colleagues and rivals. The idea of stopping the turnover of labor force by introducing the right of godfatherhood in factories and organizing "labor reserves" already in August 1939 reported to Stalin and clearly met with support. Otherwise, Malyshev would not have published such an article.

Even then, Malyshev knew what total mobilization of industry would lead to. And he was not the only one: "The economy receives a one-sided military development, which cannot continue indefinitely. It either leads to war, or due to unproductive costs of co -

This is what Marshal of the Soviet Union V.D. Sokolovsky said after the war (Military Strategy. P. 284).

This simple idea was understood even before the war: "The transition of almost the entire economy of the country to the production of military goods means an inevitable reduction in the supply of peaceful needs of the population and a complete depression of industry: the industries that are not important for defense will have to stop working very quickly and those that work for defense will have to develop strongly. This was written in 1929 by the outstanding Soviet military theorist V.K. Triandafillov. (The Nature of Operations of Modern Armies. p. 50).

Here is the opinion of Colonel-General Boris Vannikov. Vannikov is the same type of Stalinist Commissar as Malyshev. Stalin himself awarded himself the Gold Star of the Hero of Socialist Labor with the number 1. Boris Vannikov received such a star among the first ten cavaliers. Stalin stopped there. After the war Stalin gave Vannikov a second Gold Star. And Vannikov became the first two-time Hero of Socialist Labor. For creating a nuclear charge. Soon Vannikov became the country's first three-time Hero of Socialist Labor. For creating a thermonuclear charge. Before the war Boris Vannikov was People's Commissar of Armaments, and during the war - People's Commissar of Munitions. His opinion: "No state, no matter how strong its economy is, will be able to withstand if the defense industry goes into wartime mode during the peace period". ("Questions of History", 1969. N 1, p. 130).

So the leaders knew what they were doing. When they started the conversion of industry to wartime mode, they knew that it would lead to war.

By the way, Vannikov himself was taken in early June 1941. He was tortured and prepared for execution. Of the fifteen accomplices, two were released, thirteen were shot. The motives for the arrest are murky. It doesn't matter what they were accused of. Is it necessary to accuse a person of exactly what he is guilty of? Another thing is important: the mass arrests in industry, from the worker who was twenty-one minutes late to the People's Commissars who were never late, were aimed at creating a frontline situation in the rear even in peacetime.

When the gaunt, shaven-haired deputy People's Commissars and the People's Commissars themselves from torture chambers suddenly found themselves back in their ministerial chairs, it became immediately clear to everyone that they had to work better: Comrade Stalin needed a lot of weapons.

Chapter 21 ABOUT STALIN'S PETREL

You won't give up? Die with you! We'd rather have a paradise, taken in battle.

Demian Poor.

Once I had to see Soviet Olympians playing volleyball. The spectacle was outstanding: huge guys, powerful flexible muscles, chopping blows and an incredible ability to detect weakness - only the opponents (also ferocious) weakened for a fraction of a second the defense of a piece of the court, and it was on this piece that a blow of all-destroying force, which could not be repelled, fell. Ours didn't just hit, but with deception: they hit in one direction, but hit in another. The opponents also had a lot of deceptive tricks, but ours could not be deceived. The reaction of the Soviet Olympians was superhuman. I wouldn't say a wolf's reaction or a tiger's reaction, no, it was something beyond the realm of possibility.

And Yuri Chesnokov was especially different in this case. What he was doing on the court was incomprehensible. The opponent in the terrible force of the swing bends like a steel spring, and it is clear that will hit the right far corner, the entire Soviet team rushes to the right far corner, and only one Chesnokov rushes ... in the left near. A split second later, the shot follows, and exactly where Chesnokov had already jumped. Everything happened simultaneously, but I could not get rid of the feeling that first Chesnokov jumps to the right place, and then the opponent strikes there. It turned out that Chesnokov had anticipated the most insidious blows, and that's why he fought them off.

After the match, I asked Chesnokov's fans if it is true that he knows in advance where he will strike. True, they said. But how can he know it? Intuition - answered some. Genius, said others. Reads the minds of his opponents, said others.

It was clear that Chesnokov is endowed with extraordinary physical strength and endurance, it was seen that he is able to concentrate the will in a short moment of reflection of the blow and immediately relax it, thus preserving the strength and ability in the next moment again to put all the power in a blow of stunning accuracy. But there was also some secret.

After the end of his sporting career, Olympic champion Yuri Chesnokov revealed his secret: he could really read the thoughts of his opponents. Everyone around him was illiterate and could not read faces, but he could. The opponent could perform any tricks, but at the very last moment before the blow his nose would turn exactly where the blow would be delivered. Chesnokov noticed this and later found that there were no exceptions to the rule.

He could read the plans of his American, Chinese, Japanese and other colleagues by the nose. And a split-second before the blow, he'd throw himself exactly where he needed to go. And beat them all.

Every trick is easy. When the secret is known. Chesnokov's secret reminded me for some reason of the story of pilot Golovanov....

In February 1941, civil aviation pilot Alexander Golovanov was drafted into the Red Army, received his first military rank - lieutenant colonel and his first position - commander of the 212th long-range bomber regiment of special purpose - Spetsnaz. The Soviet long-range bomber aviation (FBA) at that time had:

- five aviation corps, each with two divisions; - three separate aviation divisions, which were not part of the corps;

- one separate aviation regiment, which was not part of either divisions or corps.

It was this regiment that Golovanov led in February 1941. However, there was no regiment, it had to be formed. Golovanov coped with this task: he was given airplanes, pilots, engineers and technicians, an airfield near Smolensk. Golovanov formed the regiment and became its first commander. Colonel Golovanov had neither a division commander nor a corps commander above him, he reported directly to the commander of the DBA. Theoretically. In practice, Golovanov's regiment was subordinate to Stalin.

In June 1941, the 212th Long Range Bomber Regiment Spetsnaz began combat operations. The Golovanov regiment, like all Soviet long-range aviation, was not used for its intended purpose. Long-range bombers were intended for nighttime operations against distant stationary targets: cities, factories, bridges, railroad stations, while they were used during the day against moving targets on the front line. Long-range bombers bomb from high altitude targets that cannot be missed. And they were given an impossible task, for which they were not intended: to bomb enemy tank columns. You can't hit a moving tank from a high altitude, a long-range bomber can't dive, you had to descend....

This work should be done by attack, short-range and dive bombers, and only under the cover of fighters. But the attack, short-range and dive bombers died on the border airfields in the first days of the war, and the fighters died with them. And now the long-range bombers are doing someone else's work, for which they are not designed, which they are not capable of doing, and they do it without cover, in conditions of complete domination of the enemy in the air. All regiments, divisions and corps of long-range bombers suffered unjustified losses.

The 212th Regiment also suffered, but Golovanov's regiment was different from the others. Golovanov was a lieutenant-colonel for less than half a year. In August 1941, Colonel Golovanov became the commander of the 81st Spetsnaz long-range bomber air division. This division was directly subordinated to the Stavka VGK. (Major General of Aviation M.N. Kozhevnikov. Command and Staff of the Soviet Army Air Force in the Great Patriotic War. C. 81). Simply put, Golovanov is again subordinate only to Stalin. 81st Division under the command of Golovanov and with his personal participation bombed in 1941 Berlin, Königsberg, Danzig, Ploesti.

It is clear that the use of the DBA in the first days of the war for purposes other than those for which it was intended and the losses incurred thereby sharply reduced the power of long-range aviation. Still, Golovanov's division was different, and one could have expected Golovanov to be appointed commander of the aviation corps. This did not happen. That is why Golovanov missed this step. He was not a deputy commander of the DVA either, but became commander at once.

In February 1942, the DVA was transformed into the Long Range Aviation (FRA), and its

Major General of Aviation Alexander Golovanov was appointed commander. The following ranks: Lieutenant-General of Aviation, Colonel-General of Aviation, Air Marshal - go without delay. In August 1944, Golovanov receives the title of Air Chief Marshal. Chief Marshal of Aviation that month turned 40. ADD under the command of Golovanov took part in all the most important operations of the Red Army.

In 1953, immediately after the death of Stalin Golovanov removed from all posts and sent to the reserve.

In the Soviet Union, marshals and even generals of armies did not retire. Their ranks were vital, and they wore their ranks until death, even if they had no positions in the army and did not perform any duties. Golovanov is a rare and perhaps the only exception to this rule. Zhukov, Vasilevsky, Konev, Rokossovsky were in disgrace, but no one called them marshals in reserve, they remained marshals. N.G. Kuznetsov was in disgrace, but he was demoted from Admiral of the Soviet Union Fleet to vice-admiral, and vice-admiral can be dismissed to the reserve. (N.G. Kuznetsov was posthumously restored to the rank of Admiral of the Soviet Union Fleet). No obvious reasons were found to demote Golovanov, and then he was made Air Chief Marshal of the Air Force Reserve.

Golovanov's career was cut short with Stalin's death not by chance. Golovanov was close to Stalin. And to understand his fate, we must start not from February 1941, but from the beginning.

Alexander Golovanov was born in 1904. From the age of 14 in the Red Army, at the front. Serves in military intelligence, then in the OGPU-NKVD. But this is not a standard Chekist, this is the embodiment of will and energy. Golovanov gives more time to the service than any of his colleagues, and, in addition, becomes a rider, motorcycle racer, pilot. It should be emphasized that he was not just a rider, motorcycle racer, pilot, but a top-class rider, a motorcycle racer with results high enough to compete in all-union competitions, a pilot who was entrusted with the precious lives of the leaders. This portrait is close to the portrait of supermen from action movies, but that's exactly what he was. Golovanov achieved top results in whatever he undertook.

Somewhere, once upon a time, the Chekist Golovanov met Joseph Stalin on his way. Their paths never diverged again. Soon Golovanov becomes one of the people not visible from the outside, but close to Stalin, executors of dark tasks. Golovanov is his personal bodyguard. Golovanov is a personal investigator. Golovanov is Stalin's personal pilot. Stalin himself did not fly by airplane in those days, but had a personal pilot and as a sign of special respect, as a coat from his own shoulder, sometimes complained party dignitaries with a flight: you will be taken by my personal pilot!

However, such flights could mean not only respect and gratitude, but also the opposite. Golovanov flew in a silver plane with a sprawling inscription on the side:

"Stalin's Route." A mockup of this very airplane stood on Stalin's desk. On the wings

The "Stalinist route" was often marked by death. During the years of the Great Purge, heads fell, places were vacated, the elimination of first-rank Communists meant promotion for second-rank Communists. And sometimes Stalin, as a sign of special favor, sent the "Stalin Route" to a distant province to fetch a little-known party führer: you are welcome in Moscow, and you will be great. It happened the other way around: they are waiting for you in Moscow, and be you... A passenger flies in the head of the airplane, they feed him, drink Caucasian wines... He is really waiting for him in Moscow... on death row. There is information, which has not yet been confirmed, that Marshal of the Soviet Union V. Blucher in 1938 flew to Moscow "Stalin's route". After that Blucher never flew again: soon he was placed in a torture chamber. He died under torture.

Alexador Golovanov during the years of terror was like Stalin's storm herald: the storm! And I would also call Golovanov the tip of Stalin's nose: where it turns, Stalin's havoc will fall.

And then the purge was over, and a new stage of our history began: the pre-mobilization period, secret mobilization, military conflicts. I have not yet been able to establish the name of the pilot who took Zhukov to Khalkhin-Gol. I do not know whether it was Golovanov or someone else. What is not reliably known is that Golovanov appeared at Khalkhin-Gol almost at the same time as Zhukov, maybe a little earlier. This meant that Stalin was personally watching the development of events. Until the end of the fighting Golovanov was in Mongolia. It will no longer be possible to establish whether Zhukov understood the symbolism of Golovanov's presence, but there is no doubt: in case of failure

Zhukov would be brought to Moscow by the "Stalin route".

Golovanov's presence on Khalkhin-Gol was not limited to tacit control over Zhukov; Golovanov flew extensively. His activities are sparingly mentioned: he carried out special missions... While researching the history of the Spetsnaz, I found vague references to the activities of Soviet sabotage groups behind Japanese lines. Diversion of Spetsnaz sabotage groups was carried out by planes of the Special Air Group, which included Golovanov. In principle, his duties have not changed - he does dark deeds, and the appearance of Stalin's petrel means terror.

After Mongolia - Finland. Here Golovanov received the Order of Lenin. Once again, the details are hidden by the darkness of secrecy. It is strange: Golovanov is not a military man, he is not in the army and does not wear a military uniform. What is he doing in the war?

Then suddenly, in 1941, Golovanov was drafted into the army. It should be emphasized that he got into the army at his own request. Golovanov's letter to Stalin was preserved and published. After this letter, he was drafted, given a military rank, appointed commander of the Spetsnaz aviation regiment.

Golovanov was constantly close to Stalin. Golovanov knew many things. Golovanov met the top commanders of the Red Army and had an idea of what was being planned. Golovanov flew a lot. Golovanov had seen a lot. Golovanov realized that it was going to be a big war and volunteered for it. It was in his spirit.

If a major war had not been brewing, Golovanov would have stayed under Stalin.

If another conflict like the Winter War in Finland was brewing, Golovanov would remain a civilian pilot and take part in the conflict without changing his civilian aviation uniform to a military uniform.

If a major defensive war was being prepared, Golovanov would have mastered the fighter. This man could fly everything from an Arabian pacer to any type of airplane. In a defensive war, the ambitious Golovanov could become the country's first three-time Hero of the Soviet Union. It suited his nature, his talent. If the war was being prepared for 1942, Golovanov would not have asked to join the army in early 1941. This man's volcanic energy would have found another way out, another main task for the near future. But war was brewing for 1941, a big war in which fighter aviation was assigned a secondary role. The bomber was in vogue. It was a bomber that Golovanov applied for. Not a simple bomber, but one that could be used for special missions. Golovanov himself chose the field of activity in the coming war, and this intention is reflected in the name of the 212th Long Range Bomber Aviation Regiment: Spetsnaz.

This is the time to express doubts: Golovanov could not have known Stalin's plans, could not have known about Stalin's preparations for war. Golovanov only expressed his assumption that a war was coming, and asked to volunteer. Golovanov could have been wrong: maybe Stalin was not planning any war. All right, let's agree.

Let us assume that Golovanov is not privy to Stalin's plans. Let's assume that Golovanov only expressed a hunch to Stalin, saying, "I sense that war is approaching, isn't it time for me, Comrade Stalin, to put on a military uniform? Let Golovanov's letter to Stalin be just a guess. But it was a correct assumption! If Golovanov's premonitions about a great war of liberation were wrong, Stalin would have answered him: no. Golovanov, no war of liberation, I'm not starting a war of liberation, and I need you for other things. But Stalin said no such thing. Stalin proved something to the contrary.

Stalin approved the impulse of his petrel: right, Golovanov, you understand the situation, big events are coming up, it's time for you to put on your uniform, well done for not waiting for orders but figuring out yourself when to apply for the army.

Even though Golovanov did not know the timing and intentions of Stalin, and only guessed, but Stalin knew! And if Golovanov's letter is just a guess, then Stalin confirmed the guess.

One more thing. Stalin could have said to Golovanov: I am afraid that Hitler will attack, take. Golovanov (you are an energetic and assertive man), take the best of our fighter pilots and prepare from them some kind of a strike group of asses, such a group that, having met it in battle, not a single German left alive, so that in any place chosen by me we could hold at least local supremacy in the air. Let the Germans hold dominance along the entire front, but in the decisive area we will not allow them to do so. But Stalin did not say such words neither Golovanov, nor

to someone else.

An exemplary regiment of the best pilots to carry out Stalin's personal special tasks deep in the enemy's territory - on the initiative of Golovanov and on Stalin's orders - was created, but the same exemplary regiment to protect the native sky was not created or even remembered. An attempt to create an exemplary fighter regiment to protect the native sky was made only after June 22, 1941 (401st Fighter Aviation Regiment Osnaz). But it was too late.

Let's compare the facts 1. The group of airfields and restricted areas near Smolensk has been a traditional training ground for the best Spetsnaz subversive units since pre-war times.

2. The NKVD recreation centers near Gnezdovo station, Smolensk region, were used as summer camps for training young Comintern cadres from 1939.

3. In the area of Smolensk since February 1941 is based 212th Aviation Regiment Spetsnaz, which is able not only to bomb especially important objects by personal order of Stalin, but also to take sabotage groups Spetsnaz in the rear of the enemy.

4. Since February 1941, a command post of strategic importance, a command post for Stalin, had been under construction near Gnezdovo station. By the way, this is the same Gnezdovo station where Polish officers were unloaded. Katyn is nearby.

I don't know how to put these facts together. Stalin's command post from which he intended to lead the "liberation" of Europe, the sabotage squads to exterminate the leaders of neighboring countries and the planes to send these saboteurs abroad, the school for young communist leaders who were to lead Stalin's Europe, and the place of extermination of the elite of the already "liberated" countries - all in one place. Why? Coincidence or diabolical logic? I can't explain it. I only point to the knot of riddles, let historians look for clues.

But one thing is certain: in February 1941 there were no "warnings" from Churchill, Sorge, Roosevelt and others, but the tip of Stalin's nose had already turned against Germany.

Chapter 22 WHERE WAS KHMELNITSKY GOING?

*The history of war and peace can and should be studied not only by documents but also by human beings
fates.*

"Krasnaya Zvezda", June 1, 1990.

To the biography of Air Chief Marshal Golovanov can be added the biography of Lieutenant General Rafail Khmelnitsky (1898-1964). The official description of Khmelnitsky's life is published under the heading "Heroes of the Civil War". Here are the main points: an agitator in Kharkov, then secretary of a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the First Cavalry Army, took part in the suppression of the Kronstadt mutiny, the Civil War ended with two Orders of the Red Banner. In those days it was the highest and only order.

After polistavliwaets memoirs of participants of the Civil War, we find awards of those years - "award the red revolutionary trousers" or "award a cowry colt", and orders, as Marshal S.M. Budyonny testifies, were given to "heroes of heroes". Stalin, for example, for the Civil War had one order. Those who had two orders, fell into the annals of history. Khmelnitsky among them.

After the Civil War, Khmelnitsky became an errand officer (i.e., running errands of special importance) under the commander of the North Caucasus Military District. Then - work in the headquarters of the Moscow Military District. Then followed the military academy and positions: regimental commander in the 1st Moscow Proletarian Rifle Division, assignee of the People's Commissar for Military and Maritime Affairs, return to command work, the same position - regimental commander in the 1st Moscow Proletarian Division, then - deputy commander of this division, after a short time - commander of this best division of the Red Army. After - a lieutenant of the People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR.

In 1940, the Red Army introduced general ranks. Raphael Khmelnitsky received the rank of lieutenant-general, in those days - three stars. In the spring of 1941, Lieutenant General

Khmelnitsky was appointed commander of the 34th Rifle Corps, the strongest of all the Red Army's rifle corps.

During the war, he was at the disposal of the Military Council of the Leningrad and North-Western Fronts. From 1942, he was head of the supply department at the Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement. Then followed the post of General for special assignments under the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, and at the very end of the war Lieutenant General Rafail Khmelnitsky was the head of the exhibition of samples of trophy weapons. In World War II Khmelnitsky did not distinguish himself in any way - he entered it as a lieutenant general and finished in the same rank.

The biography is written in such a way that after reading it, we yawn and turn the page: general, hero, nothing more. And I have a long-standing hatred of adjutants and errand-runners. Lieutenant-General Khmelnitsky constantly throughout his entire service, like an enchanted man, returned to the position of an officer (then a general) for assignments of special importance. This constancy disturbed me somehow vaguely. And another thing: a commander's career is unnatural. My first commanding position was regimental commander: I commanded neither a platoon, nor a company, nor a battalion, but a regiment at once. And not just any regiment. The 1st Moscow Proletarian Rifle Division was a "court", capital-parade division: foreign guests, reviews, celebrations, show-offs. Service in "court" divisions is peculiar.

It is a great honor for an officer to get there, the whole life then in the certification in a shining halo shines the number of that division. It is both easy and difficult to serve there. On the one hand, the men are well-matched, there are no skinny, sickly soldiers who do not understand the Russian language, there are no old, worn-out weapons, there are no problems with supply and cantonment of troops. On the other hand, there is no real combat training either. Instead, there is a show or preparation for the next show, a "ballet" as the Red Army puts it. Khmelnitsky out of five commanders' appointments four were in the capital-pridvorno-ballet division. And he did not stay long. He held posts for a few weeks, and then returned to the posts of aide-de-camp for many years.

The biography of Khmelnitsky had been bothering me for a long time, and I couldn't understand why it was bothering me. And then it struck me: this is the shadow of Voroshilov's biography!

Let's look at Khmelnitsky's biography, only now against the background of the career of Marshal of the Soviet Union K.E. Voroshilov.

So, Kliment Voroshilov, a member of the Military Council of the First Cavalry Army, meets an unknown party agitator somewhere in the Civil War and makes him his secretary. The secretary took root. Forever. We will not guess how Secretary Khmelnitsky fought, but he received his first order after the defeat of Soviet troops in Poland. There were three mass awards in the Civil War, when orders were distributed in baskets.

The first time was in Poland. It was necessary to cover the shame of defeat with heroic deeds. Troops fleeing from the front were given plenty of orders. And then, in the general list, Khmelnitsky was included in the ranks of heroes by the order of the Revolutionary Military Council of the First Cavalry. Not that he knocked well on a typewriter, not that he sharpened pencils heroically, not that for any other merits. According to the then existing procedures, the order should have detailed the circumstances of the heroic feat, but in this case the circumstances were not described. Instead of a detailed description - "for distinction in battles to the secretary of a member of the Revolutionary Military Council". It is not good to suspect heroes, but did not the secretary himself make the presentation?

The order to award Khmelnitsky Voroshilov signed twice: in 1919 (even before the zoro in Poland) and in 1920 The order was issued the second time. But Moscow did not approve the decision. Three years Khmelnitsky wore his first order as if semi-legally: Voroshilov awarded, Moscow does not approve. The decision was approved only on October 16, 1923.

The second mass distribution of orders was after the suppression of the Kronstadt mutiny. The loyalists were put under pressure. The Kronstadt atrocity was presented as a combat operation, and they were awarded for punitive merits as for combat merits. And again they gave orders. Voroshilov and his secretary were also present at the massacre. Voroshilov received the second order. The secretary - the second. The description of heroic deeds is again absent, slippery said: "inspired the fighters". So Khmelnitsky became a double hero. And there is a photo: Lenin with the participants of the suppression. To the right of Lenin is a marine, with two battle orders. This is the revolutionary hero Raphael Khmelnitsky.

And behind Lenin is Voroshilov.

And there was one more mass distribution - during the extermination of muzhiks of Tambov province. But our hero did not end up there, or he would have received a third order.

After the Civil War, Voroshilov was appointed commander of the North Caucasus Military District. Khmelnitsky is attached to him, carrying out particularly important assignments. I had a chance to see the adjutants and errand boys. Yes, sometimes they carry out assignments of special importance. But in general, the job is a clown's job. Voroshilov was a lackey and he bred lackeys around him. And one had to be an inborn lackey to hold on under Voroshilov. Khmelnitsky held on. But there was something besides being a lackey: Khmelnitsky had the nickname Ruda and was not ashamed of it. If he had come to the Revolution from the Communist underground, one could regard the nickname as a party pseudo-name, like "Comrade Eulampy". But Ruda's pre-October party experience is not traceable. The blatantly blatant notes in Khmelnitsky's nickname did not embarrass either Voroshilov or Stalin himself. Voroshilov is a bosyak nicknamed Volodka, and Stalin's criminal alias Koba is taken as a kin to Khmelnitsky's alias. Koba and Ruda.

So Ruda was quite in his own circle. In 1924, Stalin dragged Voroshilov to Moscow and appointed him commander of the Moscow Military District. It is easy to guess how Khmelnitsky's fate changed. That's right. In the headquarters of the Moscow Military District he found a place. For a short time Khmelnitsky goes to the academy - the diploma is important - and returns to the same position - Voroshilov's lieutenant. Then Ruda receives a regiment in the Moscow Proletarian Rifle Division. It is clear to everyone - here came a new regiment commander, he came in order to mark, to serve the number, that in the characterization appeared record: "commanded the regiment" How many weeks he commanded no one is not interested in the main thing, in the attestation is fixed: he commanded. If it was necessary for certification, Voroshilov could appoint his lackey to command anything, even a cruiser. And Voroshilov would not be afraid to give Khmelnitsky not just a cruiser, but the best of cruisers. And Khmelnitsky could not appear on the captain's bridge and not give commands. It would be better if he didn't appear: the assistants, realizing what kind of bird had flown in, managed without him - only if he didn't interfere with the work. So in the regiment is clear to all that "ot-commanding", should Khmelnitsky back to his own way This system saw its heyday, in the days of Brezhnev, when he worked in Geneva Arrived from Moscow diplomatic delegation. There are several hardworking diplomats in the delegation. And between them are the children of Politburo members. Diplomats too. The children were not burdened with work: just as long as they did not interfere. And the children themselves were not attracted to work. And they wrote sweet characterizations, and Soviet Ambassador Zoya Vasilyevna Mironova signed them initiative, comprehensively prepared, and so on and so forth. If you look at the service record of such a "diplomat" - my mother, he had been to Paris, Washington, New York, Vienna and Geneva, and on what kind of work: he had accompanied Brezhnev, Gromyko, or someone else In a word, promising, hopeful, experienced, it was time to nominate...

Under Brezhnev, it was blooming in full bloom. And then, in the twenties and thirties, the system was just blossoming. But even then, the methods of career pushing were clearly defined: Khmelnitsky got to the troops in commanding positions, without changing his Moscow apartment, without moving away from the government dachas. He returned to the regiment one more time, marked, was deputy commander of the division and commander. In 1940, general ranks were introduced, and Khmelnitsky became a lieutenant-general. A lot, of course, for a former division commander, but nothing, he survived. It was also a lot for a Russian. In those days, the Red Army did not throw around ranks. Divisions had colonels or major-generals. Corps commanders were major-generals. There were times when corps commanders were colonels. Examples: I.I. Fedyuninsky, K. N. Smirnov, V. A. Sudets, N. S. Skripko. A lieutenant general is either a commander of a military district or an army commander, but not always; some army commanders were major generals at that time, such as M.I. Potapov.

In general, Voroshilov did not spare the general's stars for his lad. So the hero of the Civil War became a military commander.

Being interested in Khmelnitsky's personality, I looked through the memoirs of Soviet generals, admirals, marshals and was surprised: how come I had not noticed Khmelnitsky before. But he is present in the memoirs of many people. Each of them begins the story about the reception at Voroshilov's office with a description of the reception room where Khmelnitsky is sitting.

Major General P.G. Grigorenko recalls how, before the war, he asked for a personal meeting with the

People's Commissar of Defense. "What is our question?" - Khmelnitsky asks, and decides: there is no need to disturb Voroshilov with such a question, you will do without a meeting with Tukhachevsky.

Chief Marshal of Artillery N.N. Voronov recalls how, in 1936, Mussolini sent Italian fascists to invade Abyssinia. Mussolini organized a lavish send-off ceremony. There are foreign military delegations at the ceremony. The most representative, it is clear, was not from Nazi Germany, but from the Soviet Union. Voronov emphasizes this. In the delegation, except for Voronov himself, Gorodovikov and Lopatin - our hero Khmelnitsky. (In the service of the military. P. 76-77). We had a division of labor with the fascists even then: fight in Abyssinia, in many years we will come there and arrange such social justice that the world will tremble looking at the skeleton children. Our social transformation will cost Africa more grief than fascist aggression ...

But let us return to our hero. Admiral of the Soviet Union Fleet N.G. Kuznetsov recalls how before the war he was sent to Spain. Everything begins with a meeting with Khmelnitsky... Kuznetsov returns from Spain - and again the first thing to Khmelnitsky. Passes a little time - Kuznetsov appointed deputy commander of the Pacific Fleet - and again meeting with Khmelnitsky. Kuznetsov was friends with Khmelnitsky: "... I was pushed through Ruda, as we in his circle called Khmelnitsky". (On the Eve. p. 175). No, no, not on the post pushed, pushed to meet with Voroshilov. And yet one should have been on good terms with Ruda: he did not push everyone to the meeting.....

Marshal of the Soviet Union K.A. Meretskov also recalls how he returned from Spain - first of all, a visit to Khmelnitsky. Khmelnitsky invites Meretskov to the large hall. Here they gather everyone who came to hand: an important event - to condemn the enemies of the people, Tukhachevsky and his partners. (In the service of the people. P. 166). Meretskov does not say how he personally behaved, but after the meeting Meretskov was abruptly carried upward, and soon he took the posts of Chief of the General Staff and Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, the same posts previously held by Tukhachevsky... It was very important to demonstrate loyalty not only in the presence of Stalin or Voroshilov, but also in the presence of their secretary-adjutants-at-large.

And here Zhukov is flying to Khalkhin-Gol. A meeting with Voroshilov, but beforehand - with Khmelnitsky. He was an important man...

And then Hitler attacked. But in the war Lieutenant General Khmelnitsky did not shed blood and did not risk his life. At the beginning of the war there was a wild shortage of generals. The Western Front (four armies) was commanded by Lieutenant-General A.I. Eremenko, the North-Western Front (three armies) was commanded by Major-General (!) P.P. Sobennikov. And Lieutenant-General Khmelnitsky is sitting at the disposal of the commander of the Leningrad Front. That means he's not responsible for anything. Why in Leningrad? Because Voroshilov was sent there, and Voroshilov is dragging Khmelnitsky with him. It was possible to call Khmelnitsky an assignee of the People's Commissar of Defense, but it was inconvenient to call him an assignee of the front commander: a lieutenant-general on the errand of the front commander, when lesser in rank command the fronts themselves.

Therefore, the wording is in the order....

In St. Petersburg, Voroshilov had a scandal. Voroshilov commanded the Leningrad Front for seven days, from September 5 to 12, 1941. He had to be urgently replaced by Zhukov. But Stalin could not expel Voroshilov: Voroshilov's false glory in the Civil War was connected with Stalin's own false glory. To declare Voroshilov a moron is to step on his own tail. And so Voroshilov - as if at the disposal of Stalin, the network is not responsible for anything, and Khmelnitsky - at the disposal of Voroshilov.

Then Stalin gave Voroshilov the post of Commander-in-Chief of the partisan movement. There was no need to manage the partisans; the partisans themselves knew what to do. Voroshilov's biography describes this merit: "Personally instructed the commanders of partisan detachments". (Soviet Military Encyclopedia. Vol. 2. p. 364). Ah, not a dusty job!

Army General S.M. Shtemenko described Voroshilov's personal trip as a "proletarian" in short strokes, without the desire to offend: cozy cars, tastefully selected library... Voroshilov gave Shtemenko a whole exam... no, not on strategy or tactics, but on the repertoire of the Bolshoi Theater. Voroshilov himself is a great lover of opera and ballet and on occasion is ready to accuse any lower-ranking officer of being uncultured....

Front, war, people are dying, the country is starving. The General Staff is working according to the established-

Stalin's round-the-clock schedule, the officers and generals of the General Staff have their eyelids drooping from lack of sleep. Shtemenko happened to get on Voroshilov's train and wanted to get some sleep, but no, report to the cultural marshal... And in that cozy car a special lackey-colonel attracts Voroshilov by reading classics of literature: "Kitaev read well, and Voroshilov's face reflected bliss" (General Staff during the war. P. 207).

Now let us imagine a dirty, hungry, overgrown commander of a partisan detachment who has been muddying his tracks for many days through forests and swamps, leading his detachment away from the punishers. And here was the order: to arrive at Barin Voroshilov's house. A whole operation: the airplane was driven across the front, fires marked the clearing, taking the commander to the Big Land. And here he was in the saloon car: carpets, mirrors, polished mahogany, bronze glittering, and outside the window the wind was roaring, the darkness. Voroshilov, who had had a good night's sleep, ate and drank a lot, far from the front and the punishers, was personally instructing... And then the partisan commander - into the airplane, fasten your belts, take off, pass the front line, get ready... go!

Here in that very train, next to the famous cultural proletarian marshal and our hero lives. Voroshilov is the commander-in-chief over all the partisans, Khmelnitsky is the head of the supply department at the headquarters of the partisan movement. I don't want to say bad things, but of all the supply posts it is best to be engaged in supplying the partisans: at least there will be no shortages, material values in thousands of tons go behind the front line, they throw them in the dark and do not require receipts....

At the end of the war, when Voroshilov had nothing to do at all, he was put in charge of diplomatic work: welcoming foreign guests, seeing them off, treating them, and boasting of victories. General de Gaulle testifies that during the war the receptions in Moscow were astonishingly abundant and overwhelmingly luxurious. Khmelnitsky also found a job as the head of the trophy arms exhibition: dear foreign guests, look to the right, look to the left... Although a tour guide can do this.

The main point is different: Stalin allowed the Soviet soldier to plunder Europe. It was called "take the spoils." And the looting began. Alexander Tvardovsky in his poem "Vasily Terkin" gave an entire chapter to robbery in Germany and received the Stalin Prize of the first degree. Soldiers were robbed then, sergeants and petty officers were robbed, officers, generals and marshals were robbed.

But it was the Soviet state that robbed the most. The state robbery was dressed in the form of the trophy service. The trophy service certificate gave power: I am not taking it for myself, I am taking it for the peasant slave state. The trophy exhibition was part of the trophy service. I will not say anything bad about Khmelnitsky, but his chief, the cultured Voroshilov, was greedy for high art, and therefore Khmelnitsky trampled Europe, just like a partisan commander in the Bryansk forests. Khmelnitsky's work was hard, but satisfying: a lieutenant-general, not burdened with combat duties, with a battalion of "trophy service" trotting around Europe, with a document and recommendations of Voroshilov in his trophy service pocket... In a word, somewhere Khmelnitsky overstepped the boundary of decency and was removed from Voroshilov, and then dismissed due to illness.

There is an exception in this heroic biography, for the sake of which the whole story had to be told.

Since their first meeting Voroshilov and Khmelnitsky did not part. Sometimes Voroshilov let Khmelnitsky go abroad to visit the fascists. But this is not another job, but a working visit. Sometimes Khmelnitsky left for a short time to command a regiment or division, but both regiment and division in Moscow. And in the academy Khmelnitsky studied, to put it mildly, not in full force, giving more time to his main work. And only once something extraordinary happened. In the spring of 1941, for the first and only time Voroshilov and Khmelnitsky parted. Voroshilov is in Moscow, and Lieutenant General Khmelnitsky is given command of the 34th Rifle Corps of the 19th Army. At that time the Red Army had: 29 mechanized corps (each corps had 3 divisions); 62 rifle corps (2-3 divisions, very rarely - 4); 4 cavalry corps (2 divisions); 5 airborne corps (no divisions in their composition); 5 aviation corps in the Air Force (3 divisions each); 2 air defense corps (no divisions in their composition). Of all this hundred 34th Rifle Corps is an exception - 5 divisions. Surprising corps and the fact that at the head of the lieutenant general. So far I managed to collect information on 56 of 62 commanders of rifle corps that existed by the summer of 1941. The corps were commanded by major-generals, sometimes colonels. There are two exceptions: Lieutenant-General P.I. Batov at the head of the 9th Corps.

Special Rifle Corps and Lieutenant General Khmelnitsky - at the head of the 34th.

It's clear with Batov. The 9th Special Rifle Corps was preparing to perform a special task - landing from warships on the coast of Romania, so the corps was called special, because the head of the Lieutenant General, the 34th Rifle Corps was not called special, but was, the 34th Rifle Corps is unusual in size and composition: in addition to riflemen, it has a mountain rifle division. Unusual is the special secrecy that surrounds the 34th Rifle Corps and the entire 19th Army, of which it is a part.

In "Icebreaker" I told about a secret transfer of troops to the territory of the Odessa district, so secret that the commander of the Odessa district, Colonel-General Ya T. Cherevitchenko, did not know that an entire army was being transferred to the territory of his district. So it was about that very army, which included Khmelnitsky's 34th Corps.

Communist historians may make a bold assumption: were not the 19th Army of Lieutenant-General I.S. Konev and the 34th Rifle Corps of Lieutenant-General Khmelnitsky moving to the borders for the sake of defense? Or maybe counterattacks were being planned?

Let's remove doubts: no, not for the sake of defense, and counterattacks were not conceived. Why do we need mountain rifle divisions in defense? Mountains are only on the other side of the border - in Romania.

If a defense or counter-attacks were planned, the most powerful of all rifle corps should have been transferred not to the Romanian direction, but to the German one, and if a defense or mythical counter-attacks were planned, Lieutenant-General Khmelnitsky would not have appeared in these parts. He would have stayed in the rear. By the way, as soon as Hitler made a preemptive strike, and the war for the Soviet Union turned into a "great" and "domestic", Lieutenant-General Khmelnitsky even before the first meeting with the enemy abandoned the 34th Corps and did not appear at the front. He was better off "at the disposal of the commander of the Leningrad Front" or in charge of the supply department in the rear.

As a military commander Voroshilov was burned during the Winter War, but his political career did not suffer. He was removed from the post of People's Commissar of Defense... with a promotion. The secret of survival was simple. Stalin needed young, talented, energetic, assertive, toothy predators like Zhukov, Beria, Malenkov. But by elevating predators to power. Stalin insured himself against their pressure, their talent, their teeth. Stalin put a barrier of the old guard around him.

The best of all the role of a shield was performed by Voroshilov. He did not claim Stalin's place, he did not argue with Stalin, he supported Stalin in everything.

Voroshilov was famous at home and abroad, and Stalin (followed by Khrushchev and Brezhnev) showered Voroshilov with orders, inflating his undeserved fame. In gratitude for his servile obedience, Stalin allowed Voroshilov what he would not allow or forgive others. In turn, Voroshilov showered bounties on his own lackeys.

In 1941, an invasion of Europe was being prepared. Stalin kept Voroshilov to himself: he could not be expected to win, but Voroshilov's head Khmelnitsky was allowed to go to the battlefield. Voroshilov knew where the fate of the war would be decided and sent Khmelnitsky to the Romanian direction, the most advantageous. Not to fight against the Germans, against the Romanians. To cut the oil from Germany is what will decide the fate of Europe. It's a feasible and honorable task. So, Khmelnitsky found a place not in the First Strategic Echelon, which will have to shed blood and suffer losses, but in the Second Strategic Echelon, which will carry the victory banners to the oil derricks on the corpses of the First Echelon. That's why Khmelnitsky has the strongest corps. That's why Khmelnitsky's corps has a mountain rifle division.

It is time to question: was Stalin not afraid to put Khmelnitsky in such a responsible position? I think he is not afraid: it is not a front, not an army, and not the chief of staff. Khmelnitsky is not the only one who will fight here. Stalin gave Zhukov the task of capturing Romania personally. 15 mechanized, rifle, cavalry and airborne corps were concentrated to capture Romania. Khmelnitsky's corps, although the most powerful, is only one of the 15.

In the First Strategic Echelon gathered good commanders, including Malinovsky and Krylov. The sea landing is put in command of Batov, and in the airborne landing - the brigade Rodimtsev. The landing of the sea landing is prepared by the forces of the entire Black Sea Fleet, where the brig-

S.M. Gorshkov commanded the cruisers. Only after them the 19th Army of I.S. Konev, which includes Khmel'nitsky's corps, will rush into Romania. Khmel'nitsky does not need to be a genius, he only needs to pass Konev's orders to his divisions.

To win the war - one thing, and to set the banner of victory at the appropriate height - another. Khmel'nitsky does not need to win the war - it will do Zhukov, Konev, Malinovsky, Krylov, Batov, Rodimtsev, Gorshkov. Khmel'nitsky only need to glimpse in the victory summary:

"the first troops to enter Ploiesti were those under Lieutenant General Khmel'nitsky." No more. And that was the only reason why Khmel'nitsky went to war. As soon as the opportunity to leave was gone, he himself disappeared from the front lines.

The Communists can no longer deny that Stalin was preparing the takeover of Europe. But, they argue, Stalin was preparing a strike for 1942.

We do not agree with the Communists: if prepared to strike in 1942, Khmel'nitsky would have spent the summer and fall of 1941 at resorts in the Caucasus and the Crimea, in winter would play snowballs with the heroic Marshal at a dacha near Moscow, and in the evenings would read him fascinating books, and only in the spring of 1942 went to take the most powerful rifle corps of the Red Army.

Chapter 23 ZHUKOVSKY'S COMMAND

G.K. Zhukov, as was known, does not come in vain, and is announced only in extraordinary cases, when it is necessary to coordinate the combat actions of the fronts on this or that strategic point direction.

Lt. Gen. Antipenko, "On the Main Direction" p.146.

And Zhukov had his own men. They also went to war. It's much more interesting to write about them. Voroshilov formed his team from sycophants, lackeys, adjutants, errand boys and secretaries Zhukov had a different approach.

Zhukov was not petty. He did not like punishments like reprimand or strict reprimand. Zhukov's punishment: firing squad. No formalities. Arriving at Khalkhin-Gol with unlimited powers, he used them fully and even a little too much. He acted decisively, swiftly, and with magnitude. Major General P.G. Grigorenko described one case among many.

Together with Zhukov from Moscow arrived a group of students of military academies - the officer reserve. Zhukov removed those who, in his opinion, did not fit the position, shot them and replaced them with officers from the reserve. Situation: the commander of a rifle regiment is removed, Zhukov calls a young officer from the reserve, orders him to go to the regiment and take him under command. Evening. Steppe for hundreds of kilometers. By order of Zhukov all radio stations are silent. In the steppe, not a sound, not a light - camouflage. No landmarks. Night has fallen. All night the officer searched the steppe for the regiment. If you meet someone in the darkness, he will not answer the question: nobody is supposed to know anything unnecessary, and if someone knows, he will be vigilant: if he speaks a word, he will be shot. Until morning, the officer never found his regiment. And in the morning Zhukov appointed the next candidate for the regiment. And the one who could not find the regiment - shot.

When Major General P.G. Grigorenko wrote this, Western experts did not believe it - they could not understand our orders. They decided that General Grigorenko was simply angry at the Communist authorities and therefore exaggerated.

And then other testimonies appeared. Unlike Grigorenko's memoirs, they belong to people who were Soviet and favored by the authorities. Here's one. I chose it because it was also written by a major-general, at that very moment he was fighting on Khalkhin-Gol, and the situation is also connected with the darkness. The witness is Arseny Vorozheikin, twice Hero of the Soviet Union, Major-General of Aviation. During the war he was one of the top ten Soviet aces. At that time, in the summer of 1939, he was a young pilot.

Situation: I was returning from a combat mission in the evening. It was getting dark. Gasoline is running out. Down below - a column of troops. And you can't tell in the twilight whether they're Japanese or Japanese. And no gasoline to fly over the column. I made it to the airfield. He sat down. It was possible not to report about the spotted column: he was alone in the air, he could have kept silent, he didn't see anything and the matter was over. But he reported: he saw it

a convoy, but I don't know whose, I think it's Japanese.

Some time later, the young pilot was summoned directly to Zhukov. And the question: whose convoy was it, ours or the Japanese? The pilot replies that it was impossible to see. What happened next was this: "Zhukov calmly said:

- If it's ours, we'll have to shoot you tomorrow. You can go.

I didn't get the meaning of those words right away. But when I realized the threat, my resentment boiled over.

Stretching out at attention, he said resolutely: - Shoot now....

Zhukov hummed. He turned to the nightstand behind him, took out an empty bottle of cognac and a glass, poured it halfway, and handed it to me:

- Have a drink and calm down.

- I never drink alone.

He hummed again and, thinking, took out a second glass and poured himself a drink...". ("Krasnaya Zvezda", August 5, 1992).

Vorozheikin was saved by hardness of character. And he was lucky: he had an opportunity to show his firmness in front of Zhukov. For those who were arrested by thugs from the NKVD Osnaz battalion in the steppe and shot at dawn, the firmness he showed did not help.

Zhukov's desire for order (through shootings) had another side. Those whom he had experienced in battle, whom he trusted, Zhukov boldly put in any post, trusted any case. It must be said that in most cases Zhukov's choice was correct. People of Zhukov's choice were independent, judicious, decisive and firm.

We know that Stalin sent his personal pilot Golovanov to fight, and Voroshilov sent his general for special assignments Khmel'nitsky. It is not bad to look at Zhukov's team in early June 1941. And Zhukov himself.

Zhukov - the offensive. Everyone at the front knew it. Zhukov's appearance meant not a simple offensive, but a sudden, decisive and crushing offensive. That is why measures were taken to conceal Zhukov's presence at this moment, at this section of the front. Zhukov appeared without insignia, his presence was forbidden to be spoken about, his name was not mentioned in the ciphers, only his pseudonym.

These rules also applied to other marshals and generals, but still Stalin hid Zhukov especially.

Or particularly demonstrated. In October 1941 came a critical moment for the Soviet Union. The German troops reached Moscow. Moscow was defended by the Western Front, which Zhukov took command of on October 13. The editor-in-chief of the Red Star, D. Ortenberg (Zhukov's colleague at Khalkhin-Gol) sent a photo correspondent to the Western Front headquarters with an order to take a picture of Zhukov over a map of the battle. Zhukov chased the correspondent out of the headquarters, he had no time for photographs. But a few days later the correspondent returned to the Western Front headquarters with the same order, but now the order was given by Stalin himself.

The picture appeared on the front pages of the newspapers: the whole army, the whole country, the whole world should know that Moscow would not be surrendered - the defense of Moscow was entrusted to Zhukov. It is clear that Zhukov not only defended, but also launched a decisive offensive, which was a complete surprise for the German command.

Another example. In the spring of 1945, the 1st Belorussian Front under the command of Zhukov is preparing for the Berlin operation. On April 13 in Moscow, Stalin casually informs Harry-Man that the Germans, for obvious reasons, are waiting for a blow to Berlin, but we will deceive them: the main blow is not to Berlin, but to Dresden. Disappointed Soviet soldiers and officers at the very walls of Berlin were also told that the strike would come from a different direction. And to dispel the opinions, they announced an order that the command of the front was taken by Army General V.D. Sokolovsky, and Marshal of the Soviet Union G.K. Zhukov had left for another direction... It is clear that Zhukov did not leave and did not transfer the command of the front to Sokolovsky, just before the beginning of the offensive it is good to let the enemy relax and breathe a sigh of relief.

The principle is clear: when Stalin fears for the strength of his defense, he demonstrates Zhukov, when Stalin prepares a surprise attack, he hides Zhukov.

In June 1941, G. K. Zhukov as Chief of the General Staff should remain in Moscow. But June 21 at a meeting of the Politburo was decided: on the Romanian border to secretly deploy the Southern Front (under the command of Army General IV Tulenev), and Zhukov

to send to Ternopil to coordinate the actions of the Southern and Southwestern Fronts.

Stalin did not decide to send Zhukov to Ternopil because of the threat of a German attack: Stalin did not expect such a turn.

If Stalin feared for his defense, Zhukov's flight to Ternopil should not have been a secret. It was even possible to put a picture on the front pages: Zhukov with a suitcase walking to the plane.

But Zhukov's flight was an absolute state secret. It happened that Zhukov flew to Ternopil on June 22 (takeoff at 13.40), that is, after the beginning of the German invasion. But the decision was made the day before. More precisely, the decision was made in May, and was approved on June 21. As extremely secret.

The degree of secrecy is evidenced by the following fact: on July 19, Colonel-General F. Halder wrote in his service diary his doubts about the existence of the Southern Front: "If a new major governing body was really created here, we would certainly know the exact name of its leader...". Halder also expresses doubts about the existence of the 9th and 18th Armies, which were part of the Southern Front. The only thing that does not raise doubts in Halder's mind is the presence of the 2nd Army in the area (which did not appear in the European part of the USSR before, during, or after World War II: it was always in the Far East).

If in the course of the war, almost a month after its outbreak, German intelligence was unable to discover the existence of the Southern Front, it could not have known about Zhukov's mission, who on June 21 was given the task of coordinating the actions of the Southern and Southwestern Fronts. Stalin knew how to keep secrets.

In 1940, Hitler realized that the oil fields were under Soviet threat, but Hitler did not understand the gravity of the situation because German intelligence had failed to uncover not only the secret advance of the Red Army's Second Strategic Echelon to the borders (which included, among others, Konev's 19th Army with Khmelnitsky's 34th Corps), but even the very existence of the Second Strategic Echelon. German intelligence knew nothing about the Third Strategic Echelon or even about the existence of the entire Southern Front as part of the First Strategic Echelon.

That is why I say that the Southern Front's blow to Romania posed a mortal danger to Germany, because it was prepared as a completely sudden one, because there were no forces in Romania to repel it, and it was impossible to transfer them there before the Soviet troops set fire to the oil fields.

It is necessary to understand Zhukov's plan (approved by Stalin), and then the appointments and movements of the generals of Zhukovsky's choice take on a special meaning.

Before Zhukov, the invasion of Germany was planned to be carried out mainly by the forces of the Western Front, i.e. the troops located in Belarus. Behind the Western Front, another front was planned to be deployed from the troops and headquarters of the Moscow Military District, and the Northwestern and Southwestern Fronts were to be deployed in the Baltics and Ukraine, respectively, for auxiliary strikes.

Because the Western Front was assigned the main striking role, the most powerful and mobile units of the Red Army were concentrated in Belorussia before the beginning of World War II: cavalry, tank, mechanized, paratroopers. The color of the Red Army we find here: 100th Rifle and 4th Cavalry Divisions, 21st Tank Brigade. There were also good divisions and brigades in other districts, but in Belorussia there is a whole constellation of them. Here in Belarus served the most "offensive" commanders - Timoshenko, Rokossovsky, Eremenko, Apanasenko, Cherevichenko, Kostenko, Potapov. Zhukov's entire service between the wars also took place in Belarus.

In 1940, Zhukov proposed another invasion scheme. As a result of the partition of Poland, in accordance with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, two powerful bulges towards Germany were formed on the western border - in the areas of Bialystok and Lvov. This created a situation that allowed to carry out a classic encirclement operation - strikes of two encircling mobile groups. The greatest commanders from Hannibal at Cannes to Zhukov himself at Khalkhin-Gol immortalized their name by conducting such a maneuver. (Zhukov is destined to immortalize himself and again by conducting the same operation in November 1942 at Stalingrad).

It so happened that in 1941 the opportunity to repeat Cannes against Germany presented itself. (The German border also had two strong bulges to the Soviet side, in the Suwalkok and Lublin areas, and the German army was preparing exactly the same operation).

To carry out the invasion, on Zhukov's orders, strike groups, headquarters, communication centers, airfields, strategic reserves, and hospitals were concentrated in the Lvov and Bialystok protrusions. (The Germans were doing the same in the areas of Lublin and Suwalki.) From the defensive point of view it was a mortal risk: The best armies with all the supplies were already surrounded by the enemy from three sides in peacetime, but Zhukov had read Bismarck and knew that Germany could not fight on two fronts. Zhukov had read the intelligence reports of the GRU and knew that German industry was operating in peacetime mode, and without switching industry to wartime mode, an attack would be a gamble. Zhukov was a professional and therefore could not assume that Hitler would take a gamble.

If you look at the situation from the point of view of preparing a surprise attack, then the concentration of the main forces on the flanks in two protrusions - this is the best that can be thought of - the Soviet troops are already in peacetime advanced far ahead, they are as if already on the territory of Germany, they are hovering over the enemy groups, threatening his flanks and rear.

Of the two strike groups Zhukov gave the main role to Lviv. And rightly so. Rivers flow from the mountains of central Europe to the Baltic Sea, and the closer to the sea, the wider they are. If to strike from the Baltic, then before the Soviet troops - the fortifications of East Prussia, in addition, at the very coast of the Baltic Sea forcing the rivers is difficult. That is why the Soviet troops in the Baltic (North-Western Front) were given limited tasks. A strike from the Bialystok bulge promised more: there were no fortified areas ahead, and the rivers in the middle reaches were not so wide. Therefore, the troops of the Western Front had decisive goals.

But the most important blow is from the Lvov bulge: there are no fortifications ahead, the rivers in the upper reaches are narrow, in addition, the right flank of the advancing Soviet group is covered by mountains. The area from Lvov to Berlin in military terms - a single strategic corridor. A strike from the Lvov bulge, if sufficient forces were brought in (and they were), would be impossible to repel. Such a strike not only brought Soviet troops into the industrial areas of Silesia, but also cut Germany off from the sources of oil and from its main allies. A strike from the Lvov bulge opened up a host of possibilities.

It created a situation that strategists and chess grandmasters can dream of: one move only, but it breaks the entire structure of the enemy's defense, disrupts all communications and creates a threat to many objects at once. This could be the blow from the Lvov bulge, it gave the opportunity to develop an offensive on Berlin or Dresden. If the enemy would defend Silesia, it was possible to turn and strike in the direction of the Baltic coast, using the Vistula and the Oder to cover their flanks. Such a strike would cut off German forces from their industrial areas and supply bases.....

Zhukov planned another strike, as we know, irresistible and deadly. To Romania. And for this purpose he proposed not to deploy another front behind the Western Front, but instead to deploy it on the border of Romania.....

In addition, auxiliary strikes from the Baltic States to Königsberg, the strikes of two mountain armies across the Carpathians and the Transylvanian Alps, and the landing of five airborne corps. In addition, the armies of the Second Strategic Echelon were being secretly created in all seven internal districts, which were to begin advancing to the western borders just before the invasion so that at the decisive moment they would enter the battle, supplementing and reinforcing the First Strategic Echelon.

Zhukov personally took on the role of coordinating the Southwestern Front, which was to strike from the Lviv bulge, and the Southern Front, which was being created to invade Romania. In light of this plan, let us look at what those honored by Zhukov's choice do.

Army General I V. Tyulenev - an old comrade of Zhukov. They served together in the inspection of the Red Army cavalry. In the party organization Zhukov was the secretary. Tyulenev deputy. By the summer of 1940, both rose high. Stalin introduced in the Red Army general ranks, but only three out of a thousand received five stars, among them Zhukov and Tyulenev. Zhukov at the time was a commander

Zhukov was in charge of the most powerful military district, the Kiev Military District, while Tyulenev was in charge of the most important Moscow Military District. In February 1941, Zhukov rose higher, became Chief of the General Staff and proposed to use Tyulenev's talent not against Germany, but against Romania, the Office and headquarters of the Moscow Military District to turn into the headquarters of the Southern Front and move to the Romanian border, Tyulenev appointed commander.

At a meeting of the Politburo on June 21, 1941, this proposal was approved. But it had been adopted earlier.

In 1941, Colonel-General of the Engineering Forces A.F. Khrenov was a Major-General, Chief of the Engineering Forces of the Moscow Military District. Here is his story: "At the beginning of June, the commander gathered the leading staff of the district headquarters and informed them that we were ordered to get ready to fulfill the function of the front's field control. Which one? This question came out of many people's mouths.

- I can't add anything to what I said," Tyulenev replied.

However, when he began to give orders as to the nature and content of the training, it was not difficult to guess that in the event of war we would have to operate in the south" (Bridges to Victory. p. 73).

Kombrig A.Z. Ustinov on Khalkhin-Gol was chief of staff of the entire aviation subordinate to Zhukov. Credo Ustinov not air battles, but a strike on "sleeping" airfields. In June 1941, Zhukov recommends Major-General of Aviation A.Z. Ustinov for the post of commander of the aviation of the Southern Front. Stalin accepted the nomination.

Colonel-General Ya.T. Cherevichenko was Zhukov's colleague in Belorussia. When Zhukov surrendered the 3rd Cavalry Corps, Cherevichenko received it. On June 19, 1941, the most powerful army in the history of mankind, the 9th Army, was deployed on the Romanian border. On June 21, when the Southern Front was created, it became part of it (together with the 18th, secretly transferred from the Kharkov Military District).

Major-General P.A. Belov was Zhukov's subordinate during his service in the cavalry inspection. In April 1941, Belov's 2nd Cavalry Corps appeared on the Romanian border. At the moment of secret deployment of the 9th Army, Belov's corps became part of it. And let not the cavalry name mislead us. Each Soviet cavalry division had its own tank regiment. No German motorized division of that time had in its composition no tank regiment, no battalion, no company, no platoon and not a single tank. Cavalryman Belov loved tanks and used them skillfully. He would fight under Zhukov's command the whole war from Moscow to Berlin. He would end the war as a colonel general.

Lieutenant Generals I.N. Muzychenko and F.Y. Kostenko were at one time regimental commanders of Zhukov's division. At the beginning of June 1941, they commanded respectively the 6th and 26th Armies. Both armies in the Lviv bulge - a good position for the offensive. In terms of defense, the position of these armies catastrophic Colonel I. X. Baghramyán. In the early 20's was, like Zhukov, the commander of a cavalry regiment, then in 1924-1925 studied with Zhukov at cavalry courses. Baghramyán's service after that did not work out, got into teaching work and by the beginning of the war remained a colonel. In 1940, Zhukov appointed Baghramyán to the headquarters of the 12th (mountain) Army, whose task during the war - to cut off the Russian oil fields from German consumers. Hitler pre-empted Zhukov and Baghramyán, and the planned action failed. But Baghramyán went higher and higher. During the war, he made the most successful career in the entire Red Army: having entered it as a colonel, he finished as a general of the army in the Marshal position. Then he would become Marshal of the Soviet Union.

At the same cavalry courses in the same group studied another friend of Zhukov - AI Eremenko. June 19, 1941 Lieutenant General Eremenko surrendered the post of commander of the 1st Army in the Far East and urgently left at the call of Zhukov in Moscow. Eremenko arrived in Moscow after the start of the German invasion and was sent to Belorussia. But this was not the assignment for which he was summoned. Like Baghramyán, Eremenko ended the war as an army general but in a marshal's position, and after the war he became Marshal of the Soviet Union.

Major General K.K. Rokossovsky. Studied with Zhukov, Baghramyán and Eremenko at the same cavalry courses, in the same group. Then for a long time Rokossovsky was Zhukov's superior. During the Great Purge, Rokossovsky went to jail. In 1940 he got out. Zhukov took Rokossovsky in. Zhukov personally commanded the Southern Front, which in the summer of 1940.

conducted a "liberation" campaign in Romania. Rokossovsky was in Zhukov's reserve, ready to appear wherever a crisis situation arose. In the summer of 1941, Rokossovsky commanded the 9th Mechanized Corps in Ukraine. The corps was preparing for a surprise attack. In early June, all the corps' artillery was secretly transferred to the border areas, and the entire corps was ordered to move secretly to the borders. However, everything did not work out as Zhukov and Rokossovsky had planned... They were destined to meet at the Victory Parade. Marshal of the Soviet Union K. K. Rokossovsky would command the parade, and Marshal of the Soviet Union G. K. Zhukov would receive the parade.

Major-General of Tank Troops M.I. Potapov - "the genius of a surprise attack". A colleague of Zhukov since the early 30's. In the summer of 1939 on Khalkhin-Gol Potapov commanded the 21st Tank Brigade. During the fighting Zhukov appreciated Potapov's abilities and made him his deputy. For a surprise attack on the 6th Japanese Army Zhukov created three groups. "The main blow was struck by the southern group of Colonel M.I. Potapov, which had two divisions, tank, motorized armored brigade and several tank battalions." (History of World War II. Vol. 2, p. 217). In 1940 Zhukov became commander of the Kiev Military District. He demanded Potapov under his command and entrusted him with the formation of the 4th Mechanized Corps in the Lviv Region.

The Soviet mechanized corps were the most powerful tank formations in the world. They were designed for invasion and could only be used in offensive operations. In 1941, Hitler threw 10 mechanized corps against the Soviet Union, each with an average of 340 light and medium tanks. Stalin, at Zhukov's request, formed 29 mechanized corps with 1,031 tanks each, including light, medium, and heavy tanks. Not all Soviet mechanized corps were fully manned on June 22, 1941. The 4th Mechanized Corps, for example, had 892 tanks. Even an understaffed Soviet corps was more powerful than the two German corps combined. Of the total number of tanks in the 4th Mechkorps, there were 413 T-34s and KVs. Not enough, say the Communists. It is indeed small, if not compared to the German army. In all ten German Mechkorps, as well as in the whole world, there was not a single tank even remotely resembling a T-34 or KV.

Potapov's 4th Mechkorps, as well as the neighboring 8th (969 tanks), and another neighboring 15th (733 tanks), and all other Mechkorps in the exercises practiced only offensive topics. In February 1941, Zhukov was promoted, and with him and Major-General of Tank Forces Potapov - he became commander of the 5th Army. This is at the northern base of the Lvov protrusion. The war did not start the way Zhukov and Potapov had planned, everything went wrong, but German sources note the firm, energetic and intelligent leadership of the 5th Army in the first months of the war.

Paying for other people's mistakes, Potapov was taken prisoner. After release from captivity, everyone was expected to be shot or imprisoned. However, even Stalin made an exception for Potapov - he gave him command of the same 5th Army. After the war Potapov reached the rank of colonel-general. To my knowledge, this is the only case of a Stalinist general's rise in rank after captivity.

Major-General A.A. Vlasov came to Zhukov's attention only in 1940, but Zhukov supported him and elevated him vigorously. Vlasov commanded the 99th Infantry Division, which in a short time turned into the best of all three hundred divisions of the Red Army. During the war, the 99th Infantry Division was the first of all received the Order of Battle. But Vlasov no longer commanded it: after Potapov moved up to the 5th Army, Vlasov took his place as commander of the 4th Mechkorps in the Lvov bulge. During the war, Vlasov would prove himself to be one of the most talented Soviet commanders. At Moscow, the Western Front was commanded by Zhukov and the 20th Army of the Western Front by Vlasov. The 20th Army's operation on the Lama River is still studied as an example of a surprise offensive. However, Vlasov's name is not mentioned.

Colonel I.V. Galanin at Khalkhin-Gol commanded the 57th Rifle Division. In 1941 he commanded the 17th Rifle Corps on the Romanian border. The 17th Rifle Corps was unusual: 4 divisions - it was almost like Khmelnitsky's. Of the 4 divisions, 3 were mountain rifle divisions. The corps was preparing to cross the Prut River and advance through the Transylvanian Alps.

Colonel IP Alekseenko on Khalkhin-Gol commanded the northern strike group. B

In 1940, Major-General of Tank Troops I.P. Alekseenko formed the 5th Mechanized Corps in Transbaikalia. At the beginning of June 1941, the 5th Mechanized Corps was transferred from Transbaikalia to Ukraine. Alekseenko's corps had more than a thousand tanks (TsAMO, fond 209, inventory 2511, file 20, p. 128). "On June 21, the first echelons of the 5th Mechanized Corps began to arrive and unload in the area of the new deployment." (Through the whirlwinds of fire. The combat path of the 11th Guards Army in the Great Patriotic War. C. 13).

Alekseenko's corps (like many other corps and armies) had bad luck. The first echelons had already unloaded, but Hitler attacked, the nature of the war changed, and the plans changed. The remaining echelons turned to Belorussia. The corps was torn to pieces. On the way the echelons with tanks were bombarded and suffered losses even before entering the battle. Echelons of the corps were unloaded in different places and entered the battle piecemeal....

Colonel V.A. Mishulin commanded the 8th Motorized Armored Brigade at Khalkhin-Gol. In 1941, he formed the 57th Independent Tank Division in Transbaikalia.

In the division - more than 370 tanks. In early June 1941, the 57th Tank Division Mishulin secretly transferred from Transbaikalia to Ukraine. Its fate is similar to that of the 5th Mechkorps, although Mishulin's division was not part of it.

Major I.I. Fedyuninsky commanded the 24th Motorized Rifle Regiment of the 36th Motorized Rifle Division at Khalkhin Gol. In April 1941, Colonel Fedyuninsky arrived at the German border and took command of the 15th Rifle Corps in Potapov's 5th Army. The 15th Corps, as well as the entire 5th Army, was pushed to the border. Fedyuninsky was a colonel, but he also had deputy corps commanders who were generals, such as Chief of Staff Gen. 3.3. Ro- gozny; and division commanders of the 15th Corps - Major Generals G.I. Sherstyuk and F.F. Alyabushev. Colonel Fedyuninsky commands the generals for a reason. Zhukov knows that Fedyuninsky is irresistible in a surprise attack. That's the main thing, and that's why Fedyuninsky is entrusted with the corps, and the stars will catch up with him. They've caught up with him. He will become a general of the army. Regimental Commissar MS Nikishev on Khalkhin-Gol was a political commissar at Zhukov. In June 1941 - in the 5th Army at Potapov. Zhukov's men gathered together. But to strike a sudden blow Hitler did not allow them.

Army General Fedyuninsky recalls how, in the first days of the war, the veterans of Khalkhin-Gol gathered together: Potapov, Nikishev and himself. Potapov was upset that they had to switch roles with the enemy: it was he who launched a surprise attack, not us. "We were successful in our flank strikes then," General Potapov remarked and, sighing, added: "Now it does not work like that" (I.I. Fedyuninsky. Raised on Alert. Moscow, Voenizdat, 1964, p. 38).

It will be argued that each general, as he rises up, pulls his team behind him in order to remove his own from key positions and reinforce power with people who owe him a personal debt. This is true.

But Zhukov is the Chief of the General Staff. He raises to high positions not sycophants, but people who have distinguished themselves in a surprise attack, who know how surprise strikes are prepared and carried out. And Zhukov places these people not in Moscow offices and not across the vast country, but all of them - in the Lvov bulge or on the Romanian border.

Zhukov's team are overwhelmingly cavalrymen. Like himself. The commander of the cavalry salary - surprise, determination, offensive impulse, detours and envelopes, not positional, but maneuver warfare.

Soviet commanders of 1941 are criticized. But few people remember that before 1941 and afterward the same people were brave, understanding, prudent, decisive, cunning. And in 1941 an eclipse descended on everyone....

It must be said that it was not only Zhukov's men who were secretly moving in the direction of the Romanian borders. As we know, Lieutenant-General I.S. Konev was also moving the 19th Army here. And Gen. R.Y. Malinovsky - the 48th Rifle Corps....

In my opinion, if Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Konev, Krylov, Potapov, Malinovsky came together, and all of them against Romania, it is serious.

Lieutenant-General A.A. Vlasov, who was captured in 1942, testified at interrogation that "the concentration of troops in the Lvov area indicates that the strike against Romania was planned in the direction of oil sources."

Vlasov insisted that Stalin was preparing an attack on Germany and Romania, that the preparation of the Red Army was focused exclusively on the offensive, and a defensive operation was not prepared or even envisaged. (Minutes of the interrogation of August 8, 1942).

"Krasnaya Zvezda" (October 27, 1992) announced that Vlasov was serving Hitler, wanted to please and therefore repeated Goebbels' propaganda fabrications. By such testimony, they said, he had fully revealed his true face.

And now let's look at what the deputy chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR, Army General M.A. Gareev, wrote a year earlier in the same Red Star (July 27, 1991): "The direction of concentration of the main efforts by the Soviet command was chosen not in the interests of strategic defense (such an operation was simply not envisaged or planned), but in relation to a completely different situation. Gareev: "The direction of concentration of the main efforts by the Soviet command was chosen not in the interests of strategic defense (such an operation was simply not envisaged and not planned...), but in relation to completely different ways of action... The main strike in the south-west lay on more favorable terrain, cut off Germany from the main allies, oil, brought our troops to the flank and rear of the main grouping of the enemy..."

Let's compare the opinions of the two generals. They say one thing: no preparation for defense, only an offensive, and an offensive in the south-western direction, that is, from the Lvov protrusion in order to cut off the oil from Germany and the main allies.

If Andrei Andreevich Vlasov wanted to serve Hitler with such testimony, who did General of the Army Gareev want to serve? If we assume that Vlasov simply echoed Goebbels' fiction, then the newspaper "Krasnaya Zvezda" should be declared a mouthpiece of fascist propaganda.

Gareev's statements were published in the Soviet Union in the central organ of the Ministry of Defense and were not protested by military historians, the Chief of the General Staff, the Minister of Defense, or the President himself.

And no one protested because Army General Gareev told the truth, just as Lieutenant-General Vlasov did. And if someone places Soviet invasion armies, mechanized and airborne corps, airfields, headquarters and Zhukov's generals on a map, he will be forced to admit, even without the testimony of Vlasov or Gareev: an offensive operation of amazing beauty was being prepared.

Chapter 24 ABOUT THE THIRD STRATEGIC ECHELON

Violence is necessary and useful.

V.Lenin.

Rest assured, our hand will not waver.

I. Stalin.

The first strategic echelon of the Red Army - 16 invasion armies and dozens of separate corps and divisions. The task is to launch several simultaneous strikes.

The Second Strategic Echelon - 7 newly formed armies manned by reservists, including convicts. The task is to build on the success of the First Strategic Echelon.

And behind the Second Strategic Echelon was the deployment of the Third Strategic Echelon. Initially, it consisted of three armies - the 29th, 30th, 31st. At first glance, ordinary invasion armies. At second glance - very unusual.

Officially, the Third Strategic Echelon emerged in the last days of June 1941 as a reaction to the German attack. However, the Third Strategic Echelon emerged suspiciously quickly. To form three armies even in peacetime is not easy: it takes a lot of time, a lot of weapons, a lot of soldiers and officers, a lot of vehicles, a lot of ammunition, food, fuel, a lot of boots, finally. And these armies were formed in a matter of days at the end of June 1941 in a situation of panic and general confusion; and the panic did not touch them, and the confusion bypassed them.

The secret is that the three armies of the Third Strategic Echelon were created according to peacetime plans - the mechanism was set up and launched before the German invasion and worked perfectly despite the chaos and Stalin's absence at the helm of state power.

What were the armies in the Third Strategic Echelon? If the Second Strategic

echelon whole divisions and even corps are formed from convicts, let us try to guess who should be in the Third Strategic Echelon behind the convicts.

Shepetovka, early July 1941: the moment of captivity of Soviet soldiers of the 16th Army. Look at these faces. The war had just begun, where did the Soviet soldiers get so thin, they had not yet been through the German concentration camps?

Before the German attack on June 13, 1941, Stalin began secretly transferring seven armies of the Second Strategic Echelon to the western regions of the USSR. These armies had only offensive tasks.

The armies of the Second Strategic Echelon were largely staffed by Gulag prisoners. Stalin did not believe in the possibility of a German attack, but before the German attack he put weapons in the hands of prisoners. If Hitler had not attacked, how long could Stalin have kept hundreds of thousands of armed prisoners on his western borders?

That's right.

The third strategic echelon is the Chekists. All three armies.

The 29th Army was commanded by Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, Lieutenant-General of the NKVD I.I. Maslennikov, the 30th - by the former head of the Border Troops of the Ukrainian District, Major-General of the NKVD V.A. Khomenko, the 31st - by the Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs.

- The former head of the Baltic Border District, NKVD Major-General K.I. Rakutin, then the former head of the Karelian-Finnish Border District, NKVD Major-General V.N. Dolmatov. Three armies was a whole front. The general leadership of the three armies was exercised by the former chief of the border troops of the Belorussian district, NKVD Lieutenant-General I.A. Bogdanov, and the political commissar under him was the deputy People's Commissar of State Security (NKGB), Commissar of State Security of the 3rd rank S.N. Kruglov.

For many years, like a mosaic, I have been collecting information about Soviet troops and commanders of the forty-first year. Including the three Chekist armies. Everything that has been collected confirms that in the Third Strategic Echelon not only all commanders of armies, but also divisions, regiments, battalions, were Chekists from the NKVD and NKGB, but all commanders of companies, platoons and departments - from the same departments. No exceptions could be found.

The more information I gathered about the Third Strategic Echelon, the more questions arose. What was the purpose of the entire Chekist front? How did the border guards, many thousands of them, manage to escape from the fire of the advancing German troops on June 22, bounce to the deep rear (the railroads were jammed) and there, a few days after the beginning of the German invasion, to organize themselves into a coherent structure with a front and three army directorates, with headquarters of new divisions, regiments and battalions, with a well-established communication and supply service? And the headquarters of the Ukrainian Frontier District was located in the Lviv outpost. How did the Chekist General Khomenko and his headquarters escape from this hell?

The headquarters of the Belorussian District was in an even more inconvenient place for evacuation - in Be-lostok. Everyone was surrounded there.

Except for the Chekist general Bogdanov, his staff and thousands of border guards from privates to generals. Bogdanov and his staff somehow escaped from the cauldron, found themselves in the rear and led the entire Chekist front. Let's assume that Bogdanov could be transported out of the encirclement by airplane, but where did the three Chekist armies come from? All the border guards from the western borders on June 22 could not be transported by airplanes. And they, the border guards from the western borders, were the basis of the three Chekist armies, and all the commanders were from the western borders. Miracles.

Communist historians have written thousands of books about Chekist heroes, about their exploits in the first days of the war, but the books are silent about how the Chekist front arose. Not only have historians not given an answer to this question, but they have not even found it necessary to put it.

To answer the question about the origin of the Third Strategic Echelon, we must go back to the First Strategic Echelon and preferably to the Romanian border. Many books have been written about this time, let us open one of them. For example, the book by Hero of the Soviet Union, Major Major-General A.A. Sviridov. The book is called "Battalions go into battle", it was published by Voen-edatom in 1967. The book passed general censorship and special military censorship. The facts which are given in it, as well as facts in any of Voenizdat's books, were checked by experts of the Institute of Military History and did not cause any protest. The book has been read by thousands of people, including leading Soviet and foreign-

The book was read by participants of those events - General Sviridov's subordinates and his commanders. No one protested.

In June 1941, the author was a captain, commander of the 144th Independent Reconnaissance Battalion of the 164th Rifle Division of the 17th Rifle Corps of the 12th Army in the Lviv Region, the 17th Corps only called Rifle Corps, but in fact it was a Mountain Rifle Corps. The corps was commanded by Zhukov's nominee Major-General I-V. Galanin. And the whole 12th Army, as we know, is only ordinary in name, in fact - mountainous. It was in this army, on the personal order of Zhukov, that I.H. Baghramyan conducted experiments on rapid mastery of mountain passes.

Sviridov's book is interesting because it gives a description of the same army, but the view opens not from above, but from below. So, let's descend from the heights of the corps and the army in the 144th Reconnaissance Battalion, commanded by Captain AA Sviridov. The narrative begins with June 19, 1941. I open the first page and quote the choice right from the first line: "On the Prut River our division replaced the border guards. Leaving the state frontier, they handed over to us the fortified bank and left not quite ordinary souvenirs - walnut rods, a broken machine gun and an old sheepdog...". "Border guards, surrendering the state frontier to us..." "The forest in which we were stationed." From the Romanian side "came the cries of a Romanian village: the peasants were being evicted away from the borders...". "All of us, Soviet soldiers, were preparing to beat the enemy only on his land."

"The squadron commander, Senior Lieutenant Korobko, after the report, asked permission to send a reconnaissance to the other side of the river.

- Wait, take your time. Your time will come. In the meantime, watch and listen."

Let's see, the 164th Rifle Division received a fortified bank from the border guards, but the fortifications are not in a hurry to use - the division is hiding in the border forest. All Soviet divisions acted in this way in the frontier zone. They were moved to the border, but not for defense. On the other side, German divisions acted according to the same scenario, also hiding in the forests. They are not for defense either.

The peculiarities of the Soviet scout captain's hearing are surprising: he heard the cries of an evicted Russian village on the other side of the border river, but he did not hear any cries on our side. Meanwhile, from June 13 to June 20, the Soviet border troops carried out an operation to forcibly evict people from the border strip from the White Sea to the Black Sea. The Germans evicted from a strip 20 kilometers wide, ours - 100 kilometers. The Germans mainly moved the population. Ours were relocating and exterminating. At the described moment, the NKVD operation to clear the front line had reached its bloody apogee. But our "hero" does not care. He does not hear our cries of Soviet people and does not want to hear them. He imagines himself the liberator of Europe and therefore he hears only the cries from the other side.

After the publication of my first articles on the true meaning of the TASS Report of June 13, 1941, a group of American experts published an angry open letter: The TASS Report is simply Stalinist stupidity, we historians established this long ago. The TASS Report may be nonsense to you, gentlemen, but the day on which it was published in print is a day of national sorrow for many nations: unlike the Nazis, who evicted the population several kilometers deep into their territory, our valiant Chekists sent tens of thousands of people to the polar tundra, and few of them returned to their native skies.

Having completed the forcible repatriation of the masses of people, the valiant border guards not only removed the mine and wire barriers on the Soviet borders (see "Icebreaker" for more information), but also left the borders themselves. General Sviridov's testimony is only one example. Everyone can find such testimonies in sufficient quantities both in the memoirs of Soviet generals and in German archives.

It follows quite unambiguously from these testimonies that in sections of tens, sometimes hundreds of kilometers (where Soviet strikes were being prepared), the border was opened, i.e. the border guards left, putting the border at the disposal of the Red Army.

This is where we should look for the answer to the question of how the border guards found themselves in the rear in the first days of the war: everything necessary for the formation of the three Chekist armies had been prepared in advance, and the personnel from generals to privates, entire border outposts, commandant's offices, detachments and headquarters of the border districts withdrew to the rear BEFORE the German invasion.

In the summer of 1968, in the Carpathians, our soldiers were put into leather boots and the border posts removed their sentries, leaving the border to our divisions.

In 1941, everything was done according to the same scenario. When the Chekists left the borders on June 18-19, they knew that this was war. From childhood, every Soviet person was hammered into his head like a nail: the border is locked! Every border guard lived by this truth. Leaving the borders on June 19, 1941, every outpost commander and every private understood the meaning of leaving.

Let us recall an almost imperceptible touch on the very first page of General Sviridov's memoirs: the border guards, surrendering the state border, abandoned a defective machine gun. Everyone who served in the Red Army, in the Soviet Army, in the Border Troops, in the NKVD, in the KGB, support me: in peacetime, you cannot abandon a machine gun, even if it is serviceable. In any case, damaged property, especially weapons, must be handed over, drawing up an act. Defective thing (whether it is a secret card or a torn soldier's overcoat) must be presented here it is, and here is the act of writing off, sign. And there's no problem.

But how can you fight off the commission, if there is a report, and there is no torn overcoat, how can you prove that you did not steal it and did not drink it? And from two broken machine guns you can assemble one whole one in fifteen minutes. Moreover, according to the text of General Sviridov it follows that his guys quickly repaired the abandoned machine gun, having neither spare parts, nor a second defective machine gun, which could be used for spare parts. How can we understand the behavior of the chief of the frontier outpost and the petty officer who had the machine gun in their possession? How were they going to account for the missing machine gun? Who would believe that they did not give the machine gun to the enemies of Soviet power? Who would believe that the machine gun was defective?

It is easy to understand the behavior of the departing border guards. If you bear in mind that peacetime is over and everyone, up to and including the head of the outpost, realizes that there is already a war going on. And in war, that's how it's done. Always. For example, the 1st Guards Tank Army is withdrawn from the battle, and the order is to go out light. There is no reason to withdraw from the front line weapons, ammunition, military equipment, which were delivered there with such difficulty. That is why the withdrawal of units from the battle is often carried out in the following way: the stocks, all the armament and ammunition left after the fierce fighting are transferred to fresh units, and those withdrawing to the rear do not take anything unnecessary with them, there in the rear they will be completed and armed with new weapons directly from the factories. This is how the change of Soviet troops on the borders took place on June 19, 1941: not according to peacetime standards, but as it is done in war.

The mood in the Red Army combat units hiding in the forests near the border is surprising. In the 144th Independent Reconnaissance Battalion of Captain Sviridov, for example.

By the way, we should also describe the battalion. Its organization is standard: command and headquarters, a tank company, a company of heavy cannon armored vehicles, a motorized rifle company, a cavalry escadron and support units. The main armament of the battalion - 16 floating tanks and 13 cannon armored vehicles. Stalin had such battalions only as part of rifle divisions 207, fully manned, and a few dozen - not fully. Let's estimate.

Let's look at just one 144th Reconnaissance Battalion. It has 16 tanks, while all German infantry divisions combined have none. And in all German motorized divisions combined, none. And Stalin had a reconnaissance battalion with tanks in every infantry division. Only in the reconnaissance battalions of infantry divisions Stalin had more tanks than in the entire Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front. And the tanks are not ordinary tanks, but floating tanks. Stalin has 4,000 of them. And not one in the entire Wehrmacht. And in the rest of the world, there was not a single floating tank at that time.

And it turns out that the battalion commander Captain Sviridov on the Romanian border has 16 floating tanks, and no German generals and field marshals have none. Generals and field marshals of all other countries - also none. So a subordinate squadron commander asks the commander of such a battalion for permission to send a reconnaissance team to "the other side of the river... I imagine the same situation somewhere in 1970: a young intelligence officer asks the commander of a reconnaissance battalion for permission to send a reconnaissance team to the other side of the river... say, to West Germany.

I can personally imagine myself asking this question to my commander... I would be for such a question.

The question was immediately tied up in sheets and taken to the appropriate institution to the howling of sirens. And in 1941, a senior lieutenant scout asks a question to the captain, and the latter does not react violently: the right question, but the time has not yet come. Soon it will be.

Intelligence units and units do not keep fools. The senior lieutenant is described as businesslike, energetic and proactive. The author himself is also a good commander, he rose from captain to major-general and became a Hero of the Soviet Union. In this case, the senior lieutenant received a negative answer, but he asked the question with a clear understanding that a positive or negative decision to send an armed group to the neighboring territory depended no longer on Comrade Stalin or Comrade Molotov, no longer on Zhukov or the chief of the GRU, Lieutenant General Golikov, but on the captain who stood where border posts should stand.

In this case the captain did not authorize a reconnaissance mission into enemy territory, but there are hundreds of cases in which other Soviet captains and majors did. We are accustomed to resenting the fact that German reconnaissance planes were circling over Soviet territory, that German reconnaissance teams were prowling on our soil. At the same time, we somehow forget about our planes flying in the German skies, about our reconnaissance groups prowling around on German soil.

Reading these lines, I remember B.M. Shaposhnikov's book "The Brain of the Army". Many years before 1941, Shaposhnikov warned that "the transfer of the army to martial law creates a real rise in its military valor, raises the moral level of the army. Shaposhnikov warned that the army, which had been placed under martial law and moved to the borders, was experiencing nervous tension, it was impossible to restrain its impulse. Shaposhnikov warned that the army could not be kept at the borders for long, it had to be put into action.

Stalin carefully read Shaposhnikov's book, knew it and quoted it. Stalin patronized Shaposhnikov. 1940 was Shaposhnikov's rise to prominence, and in May he was promoted to the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union. Officially he was Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, in practice he was Stalin's chief military adviser. By mid-June 1941, the Soviet invasion armies are pushed to the borders. The top Soviet military leadership knows that both commanders and soldiers are already raring to fight, that their offensive impulse cannot be restrained. But they do not hold it back, there are only two weeks left before the all-destroying war... The Red Army is not separated from the enemy even by a thin chain of NKVD border guards. But neither Zhukov, nor Timoshenko, nor Shashnikov had such power to order the border guards to leave the border. Border guards are not their department. The border guards were Beria's. And Beria didn't have such power to order army divisions to replace his men on the border. Only one person could order the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs to withdraw the border guards from the border and order the People's Commissar of Defense to bring the army divisions to the border - Comrade Stalin, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars.

Stalin ordered the Chekists to withdraw to the rear and the Red Army units to the borders. Stalin knew that after that the Red Army had to be unleashed... Otherwise it would break out on its own.

And then something happened that no one expected. The German army struck.

Let us consider the consequences of the strike on the example of the 164th Infantry Division, in which Captain Sviridov served. There are two rivers in this area: the border Prut and parallel to it on Soviet territory - the Dniester. If the division was preparing for defense, it should not have gone into the interfluvium, but should have dug trenches and trenches on the eastern bank of the Dniester, using both rivers as water barriers. The bridges should have been prepared for explosions. No warehouses, hospitals, headquarters or large military units were to be kept in the interfluvium, but only small detachments and groups of bombers and snipers.

But the 164th Division (as well as all other divisions) was preparing for an offensive and therefore crossed the Dniester, dragged hundreds of tons of ammunition, fuel and food, headquarters, hospitals, communication centers to the border forests and stopped at the last frontier - the border river. There were 15 thousand soldiers in the division. A lot of guns. A lot of shells. A lot of vehicles. There are other divisions nearby. And all in the interfluvium: behind - the Dniester, ahead - the border Prut.

The Germans struck, captured the bridge on the border river; it was not mined, and began to cross their units. The bridges behind the Soviet divisions were bombed. To the north of this section the German 1st Panzer Group broke through and with a huge hook covers the co...

the Soviet front, cutting off Soviet troops from the rear.

And the Soviet divisions were trapped. Masses of people and weapons (there was also the 96th Mountain Rifle Division - 13 thousand soldiers). But no one prepared the defense, no one dug trenches and trenches. It is impossible to withdraw - behind the Dniester without bridges. And the defeat begins. Some people escaped from the dunghill by pontoon bridges, but try to take out a hundred thousand soldiers and a couple of thousand tons of ammunition by one bridge under bombardment.....

Let us return to Sviridov's story. He looks at the border bridge over the Prut River, over which German troops are crossing in an endless stream: "The bridge! We were saving it for the offensive, and now we can't undermine it...". "The fact is that all my military training was mainly under the motto: only to advance! Retreat was considered a disgrace, and we were not taught that. Now, when I had to retreat, I had no experience at all. We had to learn this wisdom under the brutal blows of the enemy.

This example reveals the reasons for the defeat: readiness for defensive warfare and readiness for offensive warfare are different things; the 164th Division was preparing for an offensive, that's why it turned out that way...

After the release of "Icebreaker", prominent historians came out and said that my version was not new, it was just a repetition of what the Nazis had said. I call my reader to witness: am I fond of quoting fascists? My books are saturated with quotations from Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Frunze, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Shaposhnikov, Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Konev, Vasilevsky, Eremenko, Biryuzov, Moskalenko, Meretskov, Kuznetsov and many others. Which of them is a fascist? Is Marx a fascist? Or Lenin? Or perhaps Trotsky? This chapter is almost entirely on quotations from the book of Major-General A.A. Sviridov, Hero of the Soviet Union. And it could have been based on quotes from Kalyadin, Kupriyanov, Shepelev and anyone else.

If the version is fascist, it is not me who should be reproached, but the Soviet marshals and generals; I am only repeating their words. I don't understand the rage of my critics. Why are you attacking me? Why were you silent when books by Zhukov and Rokossovsky, Baghramyan, Eremenko and the same Sviridov were published? Your noble anger should have been directed at them. And I'm just a humble collector of quotations ...

And some historians said that it is impossible to argue with my version, but I can not believe me yet, because top secret documents on the preparation of Soviet aggression have not been found.

Comrade historians, top secret documents will be found. They will find them. If they want to.

But will they want to? Let us imagine ourselves in the place of a famous professor who has received worldwide recognition for his work, academic degrees and titles, prizes, dachas, orders, who has written dozens of books and hundreds of articles about Stalin being an innocent victim. If just one document, just one sheet, is found and published, the whole world will know that the outstanding scientist was wrong, to put it mildly, that the prizes and orders were not earned by him, that he ruined his life and talent in the service of the Communists. Let's see, does our scientist husband want to find such a paper and expose himself? And his numerous colleagues are in the same position: one piece of paper can crush all their theories, labors and efforts. Are they trembling with a trembling passion to find that leaf in the archival dust and publish it?

Let's imagine ourselves in the shoes of generals and marshals: are they eager to find the very document that will turn them from heroes into bloodthirsty invaders?

Let us imagine ourselves in the shoes of the President of Russia. After the collapse of communism, all cities were given their historical names back. The city of Kalinin, for example, became Tver again, and the city of Kaliningrad alone does not want to be renamed to Koenigsberg. Does our President want to find such a document that will show that Joseph Stalin's guilt in unleashing the Second World War is no less than Adolf Hitler's guilt? If they find a piece of paper with Stalin's plan, the city of Kaliningrad will have to return to its real name and the city itself to its rightful owner. Let's imagine that the President is informed that the documents have been found. I wonder what our President will order to do with those documents?

We only have the documents we need. For 50 years we denied the murder of Polish officers, and witnesses to the murder were killed. Even those witnesses who were in the hands of the Western allies were killed. And anyone who dared to have his own opinion.

opinion on the matter, they labeled him a fascist. And then it became simply indecent to deny the crime: the whole world knew whose handiwork it was. And the order was given: to recognize the crime and to find the documents. And they were found, in an instant.

They wouldn't have been found without orders. Our historians find only what they are authorized to find. But even if Stalin's plans are found, will the secret boo-

A smear from the archives? General Sviridov's book was published 25 years ago with a circulation of 65 thousand. This book can be found on the shelves of any scientific library in Moscow and London, Paris, Rome and Kat-mandu. In Sviridov's book, everything is written in plain text, the general honestly and clearly explained the intentions of the Soviet command, and the intentions, and the reasons for the defeat. The facts given are indisputable.

For the sake of interest, I decided to check the facts given by the general with other sources and found 28 independent confirmations, including German intelligence reports. All agree on one thing: the 164th Infantry Division was in the interfluvium of the Dniester and Prut, and there were plenty of other divisions there. And there is only one explanation why the divisions climbed into such an inconvenient place for defense: for the offensive. So what top secret documents are our historians waiting for? And what do they hope to find in them?

I predict that when you find top secret documents, they will contain the same information - the 164th Infantry Division was between the Prut and the Dniester... And for any division, corps, army you will find top secret documents and in them you will find that they were not preparing for defense, they were preparing for an offensive. If General Sviridov and thousands of other participants of the war deviated from the historical truth, they should have been exposed 25 years ago, declared their version fascist and published refuting materials. But no one did or does this.

The memoirs of our generals lie on the shelves, no one reads them. Thousands of historians write books and dissertations on the war, but not a single one bothers to look at the facts. Historical science exists on its own, facts exist on their own. The testimonies of those who fought in the war are ignored by our historical science. Back in the Soviet Union, I collected a library of many thousands of volumes of military books. All books of memoirs about the preparation of "liberation". And all this is open - in stores "Military Book", on Arbat.

In the GRU my collection of military books was known enough that 20 years later the head of the GRU, Colonel-General Yevgeny Timokhin, mentioned it in "Krasnaya Zvezda" of April 29, 1992. It was a pity that the collection had to be abandoned in Moscow to the memory of the Soviet authorities.

Here in the West, over the course of 15 years, I have amassed a new library - the envy of many scientific institutions. And I assert: it is every historian's dream to get into the secret archives, but even open publications contain enough information to analyze the actions of the Red Army, the plans and intentions of its commanders. Similarly, the publications of Pravda alone are enough to declare the Communist Party a criminal organization. Just as the openly published works of Lenin are sufficient to declare him an enemy of humanity.

I collected books then, and I collect them now, and I am surprised: everything written by Soviet generals and marshals is about one thing: "We, the Soviet people, were preparing to beat the enemy only on his territory", and then there are layers of materials about the preparation of Soviet aggression. Excuse me, a liberation campaign. Hasn't anyone but me read all this? What do thousands of our historians do?

There are 4130 books (or their photocopies) in my library that resemble General Sviridov's book in meaning and spirit. I could stretch "Icebreaker" into a hundred volumes, and still not tell you everything. In the memoirs of Soviet generals, any division is described by many authors. The former commander of a division writes memoirs, and the former chief of staff of the same division writes, and regimental commanders write, and battalion commanders, and commanders of neighboring divisions write, and the commander of the corps to which the division belonged, and the commander of the army, and the commander of the front, and the ordinary soldier remembers. And everything fits together!

Now every history buff is able to collect information about all Soviet divisions (with the exception of the NKVD). Anyone himself can study all previous combinations and movements and see the situation in development: after all, everything is known about the movement of brigades, divisions,

corps and armies in February, March, April, May, June 1941. So, with the full map before our eyes, are we unable to understand the Grandmaster's plan? Did he have to leave us top secret outlines of his secret thoughts?

Stalin's plan is ingenious, but simple. It is enough to arrange the divisions on the map, like pieces on a chessboard, and the plan will shine before our eyes.

The archives were not so classified. True, in the memoirs of generals, we see Stalin's plan not as a single document, but as a million shining shards. Army General K.N. Galitsky, for example, in his book "Years of severe trials" (p. 33) describes the same recruiting battalion as Sviridov's, but not in Lvov outpost, but in Bialystok. This battalion was part of the 27th Omsk Italian Proletariat Rifle Division, which was secretly moved into the border forests. The reconnaissance battalion was in readiness to conduct reconnaissance in the territory occupied by German troops. And in order to be believed, Army General K.N. Galitsky gives a reference to the archive. In other words, they were in readiness for war, but not for the "Great Patriotic War".

Who prevented historians from collecting these invaluable testimonies with references to the archives, and now that the doors of the archives are ajar, to verify their accuracy?

Our historians try to read between the lines. And it occurred to me to read what is in the lines, what is in plain text. For 50 years historians have been waiting for the archives to open their doors. Will the archives help if they don't even bother to read what is openly lying on the shelves?

The question of the origin of the Third Strategic Echelon is, I hope, clear: BEFORE THE GERMAN INVASION, the border was OPEN in many places, and many thousands of border guards were withdrawn to the rear, where they were organized into three punitive armies.

The question remains as to the purpose of a whole front of Chekists. Shooting into the backs of the heads of advancing troops, encouraging the feckless? Maybe. But for that there were barrier detachments created BEFORE the German attack in all Soviet armies and corps. The NKVD barrier detachments were organically part of the troops of both the First and the Second Strategic Echelons. To visualize the power of the barrier units, I will give statistics.

This top secret note is addressed to "People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR, General Commissar of State Security Comrade Beria". It is only three printed pages with information about shootings in the Red Army during the first four incomplete months of the war. This does not refer to all shootings, but only to shootings among servicemen stopped by operational barriers and barrier detachments.

The reference begins with the following words: "From the beginning of the war until October 10 of this year, the NKVD special departments and barrier detachments of the NKVD rear guard troops detained 657,364 servicemen who had left their units and fled from the front. Of these, 249,969 were detained by the operational barriers of the Special Divisions and 407,395 by the barrier detachments of the NKVD rear guard troops. The special departments arrested 25,878 people, the rest were formed into combat units and sent to the front. According to the decisions of the Special Divisions and the sentences of military tribunals 10201 people were shot, 3,321 of them in front of the line.

Then follows the statistics of arrests, shootings in general and shootings in front of the line on different fronts. It follows from the statistics that the most arrests were made on the Western Front - a thousand people a month - 4013 people in 4 months. On the same front they shot most of all - 2136 people. The probability of survival after arrest was less than 50 percent. The most frequent shootings in front of the ranks took place on the North-Western Front - 730 people in the first 4 months of the war.

The certificate was signed by the deputy head of the Special Department of the NKVD of the USSR, Commissar of State Security 3rd rank Milstein. This document was submitted to the Constitutional Court of Russia as one of the accusatory documents of the criminal activities of the Communist Party.

The document shows that in each of the first three days of the war 92 servicemen were shot at the front, including 30 people shot every day in front of units. These statistics include only those who were stopped by the Special Divisions and barrier units.

The statistics do not take into account those who were arrested at battle stations. Here, for example, on June 22

near the city of Grodno, an airplane of the 207th Bomber Aviation Regiment was shot down, the crew was killed, only the gunner-radiator junior sergeant A.M. Shcheglov survived. He returned to the regiment (air garrison Vorovskoye, Smolensk region) on June 28, "was arrested by the NKVD and shot for treason against the Motherland". ("Krasnaya Zvezda", June 26, 1991).

This is a completely different kind of crime and a completely different statistic, not related to the security detachments and operational barriers of the Special Department. This case (and thousands of others like it) is not in the category of "those who have left their units and fled from the front", it is an ordinary case - a junior sergeant reached his home regiment....

Someday the statistics on the shootings of those who returned to their units will be published. But even the statistics of shootings of stragglers shows unambiguously that the NKVD operational barriers and barrier detachments coped with their duties and did not need the help of the Third Strategic Echelon even in the critical situation of general withdrawal, panic and confusion. In the "liberation" war, the Special Divisions and barrier detachments would have done without the assistance of the Third Strategic Echelon.

Based on these statistics, I believe that the Third Strategic Echelon of the three NKVD armies was not formed to shoot Soviet soldiers of the First and Second Strategic Echelons.

Or maybe the Chekist front was formed to suppress resistance in the "mastered" territories? It is not excluded. But for this purpose, the First and Second Strategic Echelons included dozens of NKVD motorized rifle divisions with tanks, howitzer artillery and everything necessary to establish social justice.

The main task of the Third Strategic Echelon was different. Before each "liberation" of 1939-1940, the border guards were divided into two unequal groups: some remained on the border and were used in the first echelon of attack as elite subversive detachments and groups, while others withdrew to the rear and entered the battle at the very last stage of the "liberation" campaign, consolidating the success of the army formations and taking the new border under guard. This is how the Soviet border troops were divided in mid-June 1941....

This is what the Germans were doing as well. Intelligence bulletin of the North-Western Front Headquarters N 02 of June 21, 1941 reports on the activities of German troops on the border of East Prussia: "The protection of the border and surveillance of our border was entrusted to field units... The civilian population was asked to evacuate 20 kilometers inland from the border". (TsAMO, fond 221, inventory 1362, file 5, p. 27).

The Germans have everything like us, but what surprised me was not the content of the document, but the number. Zero for secret documents. Two zeros for top secret... From the beginning of each year the numbering is resumed. So why only the second intelligence report on June 21? The district intelligence chief puts a new intelligence report on the desk of the district commander once a week, and in case of aggravation of the situation - every day. Why is the number so small? Because on June 19, 1941, the North-Western Front with its own headquarters, intelligence and other departments had already separated from the Baltic Military District and took on a life of its own, and the numbers of orders, intelligence reports and other documents went from the very beginning, from 01 and above, and already on June 21, 1941, Colonel Karlin signed in documents as Assistant Commander of the NWF (North-Western Front) for air defense. (TsAMO, fond 344, inventory 5564, file 1, p. 62), and in all other districts the eviction of people, the withdrawal of border guards and their replacement by field units meant that the Red Army was already in the war, it had already deployed the fronts and took over the border except for some sections and checkpoints.

Admiral Y.A. Panteleev recalls how a few days before June 22 he was reported about the situation in Finland: "Finnish border guards and the entire local population went deep into the country... The border is open... This is war!". (Marine Front. p. 27).

That's a perfectly valid analysis of the situation. But let me ask you, didn't the same thing happen on our side? The only difference is that the Finnish population left the border areas voluntarily....

The forcible deportation of hundreds of thousands of people from the border regions, the destruction of their own border fences, the withdrawal of border troops, and the formation of three Cheka armies behind two strategic echelons of the Red Army are not mere indications

war, it is the war itself in all its glorious inevitability, with the first tens of thousands of casualties among our own, Soviet, civilians of the borderland.

The secret mobilization had gone too far. Inevitably and soon after the border guards had withdrawn from the state borders, M-Day was to come.

Chapter 25

DID STALIN BELIEVE HITLER?

I don't trust anyone. I don't believe myself. I. Stalin.
Testimony of N. Khrushchev. "Ogonyok", 1989, N 36, p. 17.

On June 22, 1941, before dawn, an echelon loaded with grain peacefully rumbled across the border bridge in Brest from the Soviet side to the German side, and a few minutes later artillery batteries struck from the German side and Guderian's tanks came....

We are told: it happened because Stalin believed Hitler. And they've been saying for decades: Stalin believed Hitler. And they give us the facts. We believe. Our faith is hard to shake, it is based on our knowledge of what happened on June 22. In the light of our knowledge, Stalin's actions seem foolish, Hitler's actions treacherous.

But let's be objective. To do this, we need to detach ourselves for a moment from our knowledge of subsequent events. We need to imagine ourselves in 1939, in 1940, in the first half of 1941 and look at the events through the eyes of the people of that time. And in those times the facts known to us were perceived quite differently, for no one could know what the Soviet-Fascist conspiracy would lead to, how it would all end.

It is interesting to look at the political cartoons of those days. Caricaturists drew Stalin and Hitler in a kiss: Hitler embracing Stalin and holding a knife to his back, or Stalin embracing Hitler and doing the same. Or Stalin and Hitler in an embrace, each with one hand embracing his partner, the other, free, pulls out a gun.

Then the situation changed, Hitler got bogged down in the war against the West, and the political caricatures changed: Hitler has both hands full, while Stalin has both hands free, and he is trying on his hands... Or - a German eagle fighting a British lion, behind him a big bear with Stalin's moustache is looking at the fight with an appraising eye.

If you imagine yourself in that time, Stalin's actions are not so stupid. Stalin fed Hitler bread. That's true. But we do not spare cheese for the mousetraps. Our generosity is not dictated by concern for the happy life of the mice, but by other considerations Stalin sent Hitler friendly, soothing messages... But the animal breeder also soothingly strokes the bull's neck before stabbing it. The German bull nudged the livestock farmer on the horns, but it does not follow that the livestock farmer's affectionate movements were dictated by mere naivety and kindness. It's just that the bull was moments ahead of the livestock farmer.

We can look at the Soviet-German friendship from another angle. It should be remembered that Hitler constantly and deeply underestimated Stalin, the power of the Red Army and the Soviet Union as a whole. Hitler realized that Stalin was preparing an invasion, but did not appreciate Stalin's magnitude. In addition, Soviet intelligence managed to mislead German intelligence about the timing of the Soviet attack. Most German experts then (and modern historians now) believed that a Soviet attack was being prepared for 1942.

Hitler did not realize how great and close the danger was. Hitler postponed the start of the war against the Soviet Union several times. Let us imagine that Hitler once again postponed the war against Stalin, and Stalin would strike on July 6, 1941 and at the same time declare a general mobilization - M-Day. Evaluate Stalin's actions from this point of view, and they immediately cease to seem foolish. Take the same example of bread supplies. In addition to bread, the Soviet Union supplied Germany with oil, timber, many types of strategic raw materials. Starting from March 1941, there were even complaints from the Soviet Union that the German side did not supply enough wagons for Soviet grain... Naive stupidity, nothing more.

And I paid attention to this little thing: Stalin could not in March, April, May, June send 1941 bread to Germany. It was 1940 bread. Storage of millions of tons of grain is a complicated and expensive business. And it is not clear why, having harvested the 1940 crop, the grain did not

It turned out that in the fall of 1940, Germany was demanding and the Soviets were finding reasons to deliver minimal quantities of bread. It turned out that in the fall of 1940 Germany was demanding and the Soviets were finding reasons to supply bread in minimal quantities.

And then suddenly - from the spring of 1941 - grain and many other types of food and raw materials began to be shipped to Germany in increasing quantities, requiring more and more railcars. The plot seemed interesting. I looked up German statistics and gasped. The main strategic direction of the Soviet-German war in any case runs along the axis Moscow - Smolensk - Brest - Warsaw - Frankfurt (on the Oder) - Berlin (or vice versa).

So, by the beginning of June 1941, the strategic railroad in the Frankfurt area was almost completely blocked by echelons of Soviet timber and ore. This is the kind of friendly hug that is used to strangle yesterday's buddy. On the one hand, we demonstrate our touching naivety, and as a result, the capacity of the main German highway is drastically reduced.

In case of a Soviet strike, the German command could not fully use the highway for evacuation, transfer of reinforcements and maneuvering reserves. So those in Moscow who planned deliveries to Germany were not so foolish.

The Soviet Union supplied Germany with coal, coke, manganese, and more. They remember it, they laugh at it. But for some reason they do not remember that it was not free of charge.

All through the war and for many years afterward, a unique German press of the firm worked in the Urals

"Schleman" with a force of 15,000 tons. Red-hot ingots of strong steel weighing 160 tons each were fed to the press by a crane (German), whose hooks and chains alone weighed 100 tons. The press compressed the ingot, after which the fire-breathing steel monolith was fed to the rolling mill (also German). Without such a press, tank production in the Soviet Union would have been much lower, and without enough tanks there might not have been victories at Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk. The Schlemann press was delivered from Germany at a time when the Soviet Union was "neutral" and Germany was already at war against all of Europe.

If Stalin had attacked Hitler, we would be laughing at naive, gullible Hitler right now. But even without Stalin's attack, selling a unique machine does not seem to me personally to be the most sensible move.

Hitler failed to capture Leningrad. The reasons are many. Among them is the power of the coastal fortifications erected around the city from the time of Peter the Great up to and including Stalin's time. In 1940, the coastal batteries on the Baltic Sea (gun towers weighing several hundred tons each) were erected with the help of German floating cranes of the Demag company.

A whole book could be written about what Stalin received from Hitler during the Allied period. All of this can be summarized in a nutshell: from the first day of the war, German soldiers and officers encountered unfamiliar Soviet weapons on the battlefields, the characteristics of which exceeded world standards. There are many examples, starting with the T-34.

And the Red Army in 1941 did not meet any technical surprises. All samples of armaments, which the Wehrmacht had in 1941, were sold to Stalin months or years before the invasion. The German side did Stalin another favor by its actions: having samples of German weapons and all the technical documentation, Soviet military intelligence checked the reports of its secret agents and determined which of the agents were reporting accurate information and which were not so accurate, i.e. who could be relied upon in the future and who could not.

Soviet People's Commissar of Iron and Steel I.F. Tevosyan visited German tank factories in May 1941 and was shown ALL of them. (And he spat when he learned that Germany had no tanks with anti-submarine armor, no tanks with diesel engines, no tanks with wide tracks, no tanks with powerful guns; Tevosyan refused to believe it). If Stalin had attacked Hitler in July, how would we now evaluate the Soviet minister's visit to the secret tank factories, where nothing was hidden from him?

And Hitler sold airplanes not only those that were in service with the Luftwaffe, but also those that were under development. Hitler sold airplanes so that the Soviet side had a year to study them. To study and buy German aircraft, Stalin sent his best test pilots and aircraft designers, including his aviation advisor, A.S. Yakovlev, on repeated long trips.

Here is his story: "I must confess that I too was embarrassed by the frankness in showing the most secret area of armament." (Purpose of Life. p. 220). "Stalin, as before, was very interested in the question of whether the Germans are not cheating us by selling aircraft. I reported that now, as a result of this third trip, there is already a firm conviction (although it does not fit in the mind) that the Germans have shown the true level of their aviation technology". (Ibid., p. 247). And immediately Stalin's reaction: "Organize the study of German aircraft by our people. Compare them with our new ones. Learn to beat them." (Ibid.).

Stalin also had something in the field of aviation. The Soviet Er-2 and Pe-2 bombers were superior to their German counterparts in every respect. But Stalin not only did not sell them, but also did not show them to Hitler.

So who believed who more?

The heavy cruiser Lützow, sold by Germany, was not completed. For this reason, there are rumors that the German side was unscrupulous in fulfilling the order. I believed it too. But then I found information that almost everything was delivered within the contractual deadlines. And if not everything was delivered in time, circumstances prevented it. But of the eight main caliber guns, four were delivered and mounted. During the war the cruiser was used as a fixed floating battery. But all other ships of the Baltic Fleet trapped in the Gulf of Finland were used in the same way.

The "Krasnaya Zvezda" of January 7, 1989 testifies how conscientious German firms were in fulfilling their orders. The Germans supplied everything they had time for, even sets of dishes for more than a thousand crew members. Every plate and every mug, as it should be, had a swastika on it. The Soviet comrades receiving the cruiser decided to "accidentally" destroy all the dishes and demand new ones without swastikas. For the sake of this, an inspection was organized "packaging security." The boxes of plates were shaken and thrown, but not a single plate was broken. Everything was done with German precision and accuracy, and packed to perfection. We had to take the ones with swastikas.

You can repeat that Stalin believed Hitler, but people who stood close to Stalin in those years, this legend does not confirm.

Admiral of the Navy of the Soviet Union NG Kuznetsov: "Stalin did not particularly believe in the strength of the treaty with Germany and in general had little confidence in Hitler". (On the Eve. p. 241).

Marshal of the Soviet Union G. K. Zhukov: "As for the non-aggression pact concluded with Germany ... there is no reason to assert that Stalin relied on it". (Memories and Reflections. p. 236).

And Nikita Khrushchev testifies that Stalin, after signing the Pact, shouted joyfully that he had deceived Hitler. The Pact was a trap for Hitler. Imagine that a criminal spent all night forging a false bill of exchange and handed it to you in the morning. Can the criminal himself believe that the bill of exchange is real?

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was invented by Stalin in order to start World War II with Hitler's hands, to ruin and weaken Europe, including Germany.

Could Stalin have believed this pact if its original purpose was to deceive Hitler? If that doesn't convince, let's turn to statistics. On June 21, 1939, Stalin had 94 rifle and mountain rifle divisions. Exactly two years later, on June 21, 1941, he had 198 rifle and mountain rifle divisions. In addition, preparations had been made and orders given for the formation of more than 60 more rifle divisions, which should appear after the surprise strikes and the declaration of M-Day.

During these two years, the number of motorized and motorized divisions increased from 1 to 31.

The number of armored divisions increased from 0 to 61. Several dozen more armored divisions were in the process of formation, which was to be completed after M-Day was declared.

The number of air divisions increased in two years from 0 to 79, rifle corps from 25 to 62, artillery regiments (not counting anti-aircraft) from 144 to 900, and several hundred more regiments were being prepared for deployment after the Red Army's first strikes.

The number of mechanized (tank) corps increased from 4 to 29, airborne brigades from 6 to 16, airborne corps from 0 to 5, and 5 more were planned to be rapidly deployed on M-Day and the next few days.

The number of armies in the European part of the USSR increased from 0 to 26 in two years.

For 50 years the Communists have assured us that Stalin believed Hitler. Statistics do not support this assurance.

The case was just the opposite. Hitler believed Stalin and signed the Pact, which created for Germany a knowingly losing situation of war against the whole of Europe and the world. The Pact put Germany in the position of the sole perpetrator of the war. On August 19, 1939, Stalin began the secret mobilization of the Red Army, after which the Second World War became completely inevitable.

But Hitler paid no attention to events in the Soviet Union. Even earlier, Stalin had begun mobilizing industry, transport, state apparatus, and human resources. But Hitler did not pay attention to all this and did not carry out similar measures in Germany.

Hitler trusted Stalin for too long. With Stalin in his rear, Hitler carelessly waged war against France and Britain, throwing all the tanks, all the combat aviation, the best generals and the vast majority of the artillery against them. In the summer of 1940, only 10 divisions remained on Germany's eastern borders, without a single tank and without air cover. This was a mortal risk, but Hitler did not realize it. Meanwhile, Stalin was preparing the axe. Hitler saw it too late.

Hitler's blow could no longer save Germany. Stalin not only had more tanks, guns and airplanes, more soldiers and officers, Stalin had already converted his industry to wartime mode and could produce weapons in any quantities needed.

Stalin was a criminal. At the beginning of the century, Stalin led and personally participated in the Tiflis bank robbery, a crime that surprised Europe. Stalin's preparations for an attack on Germany were as meticulous as the famous robbery.

But to complete the secret mobilization Stalin did not have time. Hitler struck at a time when the Red Army and the entire Soviet Union was in the most inconvenient situation to repel an attack - themselves were preparing an attack.

What could have happened in the square in front of the bank, if one of the guards had realized what was happening and shot first....

At the last moment before the attack, the Red Army was as vulnerable as criminals are in an open square, if their plan is discovered by the guards, if the guards start shooting. Stalin had everything calculated to every step, to every second, and Hitler, who woke up, spoiled everything with one shot....

Let's imagine, you and I have prepared ropes, ladders, dynamite to blow up walls, keys and lockpicks, and suddenly after the first shot of the guards all this becomes unnecessary, and we are forced to flee....

Hitler struck first, and therefore Stalin's preparation for the war turned out to be a disaster for Stalin. As a result of the war Stalin got only:

Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, China, half of Korea, half of Vietnam. Was this the modest result Stalin had hoped for?

Let's summarize.

The beginning of the secret mobilization was the actual entry into World War II. Stalin understood this and deliberately ordered the beginning of the secret mobilization on August 19 1939. From that day on, no matter how events unfolded, the war could not be stopped.

Therefore, AUGUST 19, 1939 is the DAY STALIN BEGAN THE WORLD WAR.

The secret mobilization was to culminate in the attack on Germany and Romania on July 6, 1941. At the same time, M Day was to be declared in the Soviet Union, the day when mobilization would turn from secret to open and universal.

Secret mobilization was aimed at preparing for aggression. Nothing was done for the defense of the country. The secret mobilization was so enormous that it could not be concealed. Hitler had only one chance to save himself with a preemptive strike. Hitler pre-empted Stalin by

for two weeks. That's why M-Day hasn't come.

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